

Community Board 8, Borough of The Bronx

# CD 8 2000: A RIVER TO RESERVOIR PRESERVATION STRATEGY



A 197-a plan as adopted by the City Planning Commission  
and the City Council



Department of City Planning  
City of New York

Community Board 8, Borough of The Bronx

# CD 8 2000: A RIVER TO RESERVOIR PRESERVATION STRATEGY

A 197-a plan as adopted by the  
City Planning Commission and the City Council



City of New York  
Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor

Department of City Planning  
Amanda M. Burden, Director

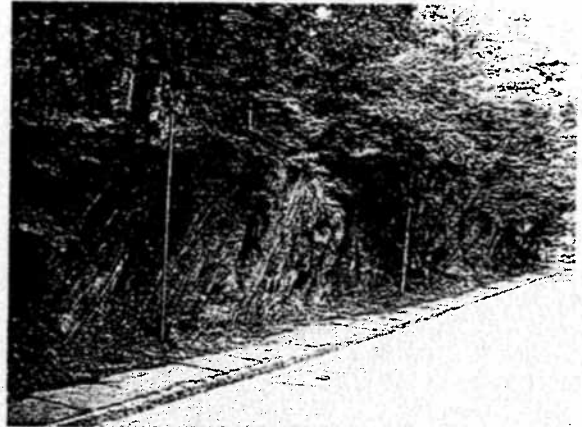


## INTRODUCTION

Under Section 197-a of the New York City Charter, community boards may propose plans for the development, growth and improvement of land within their districts. The plans are reviewed in accordance with standards and rules of procedure for 197-a plans which were developed and adopted by the City Planning Commission. Once approved by the Commission and adopted by the City Council, as submitted or as modified, 197-a plans serve as policy guides for subsequent actions by city agencies.

In the fall of 2003, the City Planning Commission and the City Council approved the 197-a plan submitted by Bronx Community Board 8, *CD 8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy*. This report provides information for those interested in the plan's policies and recommendations. It may also be of interest to other communities considering the 197-a process. The report contains three sections:

1. The City Council resolution, dated November 19, 2003, adopting the plan as approved by the City Planning Commission.
2. The City Planning Commission report, dated October 22, 2003, approving a modified plan as illustrated in a planning framework map in accordance with the Community Board's letter of June 27, 2003.
3. The Community Board's proposed 197-a plan, as submitted June 2000 and modified May 2002.



# Section 1

## City Council Resolution

City Council Resolution, dated November 19, 2003,  
adopting 197-a plan as approved by the City Planning Commission

**THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
RESOLUTION NO. 1178**

**Resolution approving the decision of the City Planning Commission on Non-ULURP No. N 000618 NPX, a Section 197-a Plan for Community Board No. 8 in the Bronx (L.U. No. 571).**

**By Council Members Katz and Martinez**

WHEREAS, the City Planning Commission filed with the Council on October 29, 2003 its decision dated October 22, 2003 (the "Decision"), on the Plan, known as *CD 8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy, A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8*, submitted by Bronx Community Board No. 8, pursuant to Section 197-a of the New York City Charter (Non-ULURP No. N 000618 NPX) (the "Plan");

WHEREAS, the Decision is subject to review and action by the Council pursuant to Section 197-d(b)(1) of the City Charter;

WHEREAS, upon due notice, the Council held a public hearing on the Decision and Plan on November 17, 2003;

WHEREAS, the Council has considered the land use implications and other policy issues relating to the Decision and Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Council has considered the relevant environmental issues and the Negative Declaration, issued on April 21, 2003 (CEQR No. 03DCP054X);

**RESOLVED:**

The Council finds that the action described herein will have no significant effect on the environment;

Pursuant to Sections 197-a and 197-d of the City Charter and on the basis of the Decision and Plan, the Council approves the Decision.

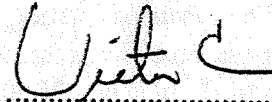
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Page 2 of 2  
N 000618 NPX  
Res. No. 1178 (L.U. No. 571)

Adopted.

Office of the City Clerk, }  
The City of New York, } ss.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a Resolution passed by The Council of The City of New York on November 19, 2003, on file in this office.



.....  
City Clerk, Clerk of The Council



## Section 2

# City Planning Commission Report

City Planning Commission's consideration and resolution,  
dated October 22, 2003, approving the 197-a plan

## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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October 22, 2003/Calendar No. 22

N 000618 NPX

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**IN THE MATTER OF** a plan concerning Community District 8 in the Bronx, submitted by Community Board 8, for consideration under the rules for processing of plans pursuant to Section 197-a of the New York City Charter. The proposed plan is called "**CD 8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy, A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8.**"

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### **BACKGROUND**

In 1997 Bronx Community Board 8 began an extensive public outreach process with the goal of developing a community-wide comprehensive plan. After numerous meetings with consultants, community residents and institutions, the Board submitted *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy, A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8* to the New York City Department of City Planning on June 1, 2000.

### **Neighborhood Characteristics**

*CD 8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy*, the proposed 197-a Plan for Bronx Community District 8, covers the entire community district, including the neighborhoods of Fieldston, Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Marble Hill, Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil, and Van Cortlandt Village. The area is home to a diverse population of about 100,000. Neighborhoods range from older mid-rise apartment districts to lower density sections. Natural features such as wooded areas, rock outcroppings and sloping terrain characterize much of the western portion of the district.

Zoning ranges from R1-2 in Riverdale and Fieldston in the western parts of the district, to R7-1 in areas surrounding Van Cortlandt Village to the northeast. Housing types reflect the wide variety permitted by zoning, and range from both large and simple single-family houses, to row houses, walk-up apartments, elevator rental or coop apartments, and public housing developments. A Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2), designated in the Riverdale area in 1975, guides development in areas of outstanding natural beauty to protect, maintain and enhance



their natural features. The district was expanded in 1981 and 1986.

Commercial uses, including some existing and proposed retail in areas zoned M1-1, are located in the vicinity of Broadway, which runs north/south through the community. Numerous institutions, including religious schools, preparatory schools, colleges and nursing facilities, are located in the western portion of the community.

The area includes Riverdale Park, a long strip of waterfront parkland along the Hudson River, the district's western boundary, and is bordered on the east by Van Cortlandt Park, a major regional park of well over 1,000 acres.

### **Goals**

The plan is viewed by its community sponsors as a means of protecting the area's unique character and natural assets. The plan also seeks to enhance economic, cultural and social opportunities for area residents. Its stated goals are to:

- Preserve the scale and character of area neighborhoods;
- Strengthen protections for sensitive natural features including steep slope areas, mature trees, water features, and the surrounding contexts of these features;
- Improve the appearance and economic vitality of local commercial districts;
- Foster economic opportunities and improve access for all segments of the population to cultural and educational facilities;
- Create additional recreational resources, enhance existing parks, and promote the greening of major corridors; and
- Preserve and educate the public about historical resources.

### **Summary of the 197-a Plan's Recommendations**

To attain these goals, the plan originally presented 70 recommendations addressing issues ranging from zoning and land use to housing, parks, education and economic development.

Highlights of these recommendations are as follows:

### **Zoning**

- 1) Study thirteen areas identified for potential zoning map changes to contextual and lower density zones. *(See Attachment A)*
  - Area 1: Six blocks in Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village
  - Area 2: Three blocks in Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village
  - Area 3: Three blocks in Kingsbridge Heights
  - Area 4: Three blocks in Van Cortlandt Village
  - Area 5: One block in Van Cortlandt Village
  - Area 6: Nine blocks in Kingsbridge
  - Area 7: Three blocks in Kingsbridge
  - Area 8: Thirteen blocks in Fieldston
  - Area 9: Twenty-eight blocks in North Riverdale
  - Area 10: Seventeen blocks in North Riverdale
  - Area 11: Eighteen blocks in Riverdale
  - Area 12: Eleven blocks in Riverdale
  - Area 13: Eleven blocks in Spuyten Duyvil
- 2) Revise Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2) text to strengthen regulations regarding topographic modifications, botanic features and steep slopes
- 3) Revise SNAD-2 to limit visual impacts, such as on walls, roads, vistas and historic structures
- 4) Consider lowering FAR in SNAD-2 from 0.5 to 0.4
- 5) Establish a procedure under which community facilities in SNAD-2 must file a statement of anticipated unused development rights with City Planning. These rights could be used by the owner upon meeting a finding of no adverse impact; anyone not registering these rights as of a certain date would require a special permit.
- 6) Prohibit air rights transfers/zoning lot mergers for residential developments in SNAD-2
- 7) Modify SNAD-2 review timetables for authorizations
- 8) Lower or eliminate lot size threshold for site alteration reviews in SNAD-2
- 9) Extend SNAD-2 to include five new areas:
  - a) Vinmont area
  - b) Tibbett Avenue area (including the Horace Mann-Barnard School)
  - c) Manhattan College Parkway area (including the Fieldston School)
  - d) Ewen Park area

- e) Edgehill Avenue area
- 10) Map three new Hillside Preservation Districts
  - a) Riverdale/Spuyten Duyvil
  - b) Marble Hill
  - c) Kingsbridge Heights
- 11) Study locations for mapping Scenic View Districts
  - a) Riverdale/Spuyten Duyvil Parks and surrounding areas
  - b) Marble Hill
  - c) Jerome Park Reservoir

***Historic Resources***

- 1) Designate Jerome Park Reservoir and Van Cortlandt Lake as New York City Scenic Landmarks
- 2) Extend Riverdale Historic District with concurrence of eligible owners
- 3) Compile inventory of historic resources to determine buildings or areas for new designations
- 4) Conduct study to develop historic roads program

***Housing***

- 1) Re-establish local Neighborhood Preservation Office of HPD for Marble Hill and Kingsbridge Heights
- 2) Continue funding for loan programs and increase staff support for tenants
- 3) Create small property owners advocacy unit for southern portion of district
- 4) Identify commercial structures for residential re-use and investigate possible mixed use zoning
- 5) Improve grounds and streets in the vicinity of the Marble Hill Houses

***Parks and Recreation***

- 1) Add and improve facilities in Van Cortlandt Park including new comfort stations, signage and restoration of Van Cortlandt Lake
- 2) Link historic resources in Van Cortlandt Park in a Heritage Trail and designate as Historic District

- 3) Involve area schools in cooperative efforts in Van Cortlandt Park and other district open spaces
- 4) Create new multi-use linear open space using the former Putnam Division rail line right-of-way
- 5) Create greenway linkages between Van Cortlandt Park and other greenway routes including roadway markings, pavement treatment and traffic calming measures
- 6) Improve/add bicycle paths on the Broadway and Henry Hudson bridges
- 7) Designate a pedestrian route along Palisade Avenue as part of the Hudson River Valley Greenway
- 8) Designate various streets as bicycle safety zones with roadway markings and signage; provide bicycle parking facilities
- 9) Create waterfront access adjacent to Metro-North Riverdale Station on a trial basis
- 10) Map Jerome Park Reservoir as New York City Parkland; remove fences; develop gardens and passive recreational facilities
- 11) Identify sites, particularly in Kingsbridge Heights, for "vest pocket" parks

#### ***Economic Development***

- 1) Form Business Improvement Districts or merchants' associations for commercial parts of the district
- 2) Improve appearance of district's commercial areas
- 3) Work with local groups to create new economic engines for improved employment opportunities; identify incubator space with support services and infrastructure for start-up firms

#### ***Schools, Education and Employment***

- 1) Create Kingsbridge Riverdale Academy at MS 141
- 2) Establish satellite schools to replace JFK High School
- 3) Establish community-based centers with on-line resources
- 4) Increase use of public schools for meeting space, recreation, and community activities for all ages during after school hours

- 5) Develop a community network to facilitate access to computer resources and provide technical support for computer users in public schools or other sites
- 6) Replace/double the size of the Kingsbridge Library; expand Van Cortlandt and Jerome Park branches
- 7) Increase hours of health care centers and provide additional preventive health and mental health services for children
- 8) Ensure adequate funding of mental health care centers
- 9) Extend meals assistance to needy elderly and ensure availability of adequate housing and support services for elderly, including assisted living

### ***Transportation***

- 1) Provide special transportation for seniors and health aides
- 2) Add additional east-west bus routes
- 3) Make improvements to facilitate bicycle safety; install bike racks on buses; require bike facilities in new developments
- 4) Improve pedestrian safety, particularly near schools
- 5) Rebuild Marble Hill Avenue from West 225<sup>th</sup> Street to Adrian Avenue
- 6) Improve sidewalks and intermodal connections at Marble Hill Metro-North Station and West 225<sup>th</sup> Street station
- 7) Improve maintenance of step streets
- 8) Increase on-street and off-street parking; provide new municipal garage at 235<sup>th</sup> Street and alternative parking for 50<sup>th</sup> Precinct; direct motorists to parking facilities at golf courses and stables in Van Cortlandt Park; prevent trucks from using parking spaces; identify more parking in vicinity of Knolls Crescent and on Major Deegan overpasses
- 9) Undertake station improvements on the Broadway elevated IRT
- 10) Consider moving Broadway elevated supports to sidewalks, at least at West 231<sup>st</sup> Street, or extend sidewalks at bus stops
- 11) Reconstruct Kappock Street; Independence, Tibbett, Marble Hill, Waldo, Netherland

avenues; Manhattan College Parkway; and various step streets

12) Allow waivers for narrow, country-like streets

Community Board 8 has revised some of its original recommendations in response to concerns expressed by City Planning staff and the Commission during the public review process.

Specifically, the Board modified or deleted those zoning recommendations that would have resulted in administrative, enforcement or implementation difficulties. The modifications and clarifications are described in a letter from Community Board 8, dated June 27, 2003 (Attachment B), and illustrated on the Planning Framework map.

The 197-a plan's primary goal is to maintain the context and character of the community's built environment. The modified recommendations call for rezoning certain areas to districts which reflect the character of the existing neighborhood rather than to a specific zoning district. The community has deleted its proposals to lower the permitted FAR in SNAD-2 establish new procedures for community facility development in SNAD-2, restrict zoning lot mergers, establish Hillside Preservation and Scenic View Districts, and seek protection for features such as stone walls and narrow roads. Instead, the community and the Department of City Planning will work to achieve many of these goals by pursuing appropriate contextual rezonings and by strengthening Special Natural Area District regulations to take into account goals such as increased protection of hillside features.

The Planning Framework proposes four areas (in Kingsbridge Heights, Van Cortlandt Village, Riverdale, and Kingsbridge) for rezoning to reduced density zoning districts. Four other areas (in North Riverdale, Central Riverdale, Kingsbride Heights/Van Cortlandt Village and Spuyten Duyvil) are recommended for rezoning to contextual districts at a similar density. Five other areas (in North Riverdale, Fieldston, Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights and Van Cortlandt Village) would be considered for future zoning study. Study of Special Natural Area District extensions is proposed for five areas (in Vinmont Park, portions of North Riverdale, the area including and surrounding the campuses of the Horace Mann and Fieldston schools, and an area

north of Spuyten Duyvil in the vicinity of Edgehill Avenue).

### **THRESHOLD REVIEW AND DETERMINATION**

Pursuant to Section 3.010 of the 197-a rules, department staff conducted a threshold review of the plan's consistency with standards for form, content, and sound planning policy and on August 25, 2000, the department informed Community Board 8 of additional information needed to correct certain deficiencies. The department further informed the board that certain proposals in the plan related to citywide zoning text changes and were therefore beyond the scope of a community board 197-a plan. In response to these threshold issues, Community Board 8 submitted a revised plan on September 18, 2002 in which recommendations with citywide implications were deleted from the body of the plan placed in an appendix. On October 28, 2002 the City Planning Commission determined that *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy, A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8* met threshold standards for form, content and sound planning policy, and the plan was duly referred for environmental review.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

This application (N 000618 NPX) was reviewed pursuant to the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and the SEQRA regulations set forth in Volume 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Section 617.00 et. seq., and the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) Rules of Procedures of 1991 and Executive Order 91 of 1977. The designated CEQR number is 03DCP054X. The lead is the City Planning Commission.

After a review of the potential environmental impact of the proposed action, a Negative Declaration was issued on April 21, 2003. It was determined that the 197-a plan would not, in itself, result in construction, funding, or approval of projects or changes in regulations by city agencies nor does the 197-a plan advance or effectuate any change or activity that would trigger environmental impacts.

On April 21, 2003, the 197-a plan was duly referred to Community Board 8 and the Borough President, in accordance with Article 6 of the rules for processing 197-a plans.

### **WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION PROGRAM CONSISTENCY REVIEW**

This application (N 000618 NPX) was reviewed by the City Planning Commission in its role as Coastal Zone Commission for consistency with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP), adopted by the Board of Estimate on September 30, 1982 (Calendar No. 17), pursuant to the New York State Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act of 1981 (New York State Executive Law, Section 910 *et. seq.*). The designated WRP number is 02-072. On March 17, 2003, this action was determined to be consistent with the policies of the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program.

### **COMMUNITY BOARD PUBLIC HEARING**

As the sponsor of *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy, A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8*, Community Board 8 held a public hearing on this application on May 27, 2003, and on June 10, 2003, by a vote of 44 to 0 with 0 abstentions, adopted a resolution recommending approval of the application.

### **BOROUGH PRESIDENT RECOMMENDATION**

This application (N 000618 NPX) was considered by the Office of the President of the Borough of The Bronx, which held a public hearing on the application on August 18, 2003. On August 22, 2003, the Bronx Borough President recommended approval of the proposed 197-a plan.

As part of his recommendations, the Borough President:

- Urged Community Board 8 to prepare and submit ULURP applications for rezoning to contextual and lower density districts, and extension of the Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2) without delay.
- Suggested that the City Planning Commission further study the proposed expansion of SNAD-2 boundaries to cover the Horace Mann School, to ascertain whether inclusion of



the school's entire property is necessary.

- Recommended that follow-up to many tactical recommendations such as the formation of a Small Business Support Center, the acquisition of the Putnam rail line right-of-way, and the establishment of a local Neighborhood Preservation Office to serve Marble Hill and Kingsbridge Heights should occur in the short term.
- Urged that issues related to recommendations with citywide implications, which were deleted or placed in the appendix of the plan, be addressed in the near future.
- Recommended that City Planning proceed, without delay, to evaluate a proposed lower lot size threshold for applicability to site alterations within the SNAD-2 district from the present 40,000 square feet.

#### **CITY PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING**

On August 27, 2003, (Calendar No. 2), the Commission scheduled September 10, 2003 for a public hearing on this application (N 000618 NPX). The hearing was duly held on September 10, 2003 (Calendar No. 10). There were three speakers.

Two speakers, including the former chair of the Community Board and the Board's consultant spoke in favor of the plan, and provided an overview and history of the Community Board's involvement with the 197-a process.

A third speaker, representing the Horace Mann-Barnard School, spoke in opposition to the proposed expansion of the SNAD-2 district to include the Horace Mann Campus. The speaker claimed that the school site does not possess sufficient natural features to qualify for inclusion in a Special Natural Area District.

In addition, the Commission received a letter from a representative of the Fieldston School, expressing concern that the special district zoning regulations and approval processes could slow its ability to provide needed facilities for its students.

## CONSIDERATION

The Commission applauds the efforts of Community Board 8 in undertaking a comprehensive and lengthy planning process, in producing a well-written and thoroughly analyzed plan, and in reaching consensus within the community on a wide-ranging set of goals and strategies. The Commission further commends the community board, its consultants and department staff with respect to their successful collaboration on a series of plan modifications and the Planning Framework map.

In its letter dated June 27, 2003 (Attachment B) Community Board 8 proposed certain clarifications and modifications of the plan's zoning recommendations in the interest of shaping a workable blueprint for implementation. The modifications address the board's desire for greater protection of the lower density and natural character in much of the district without applying inappropriate zoning tools. Specifically:

- The department will work with the Community Board and its consultant to expedite rezoning actions in eight of the thirteen areas the community has proposed for rezoning (see Attachment B and Planning Framework map for specific proposals). The board will re-examine the five remaining areas to see if the proposals can be revised by adjusting boundaries or other means to better justify rezoning actions.
- References to specific zoning districts are replaced by general rezoning recommendations such as "lower density district".
- The board has deleted the proposal for three new mapped Hillside Preservation Districts, which in many cases would have overlapped with the Special Natural Area District. While the department agrees with the intent of the proposal, it can be better implemented by incorporating many of the steep slope and tree protection measures found in the Hillside Zoning text into the Special Natural Area regulations. In addition, the board has deleted proposals for Scenic View Districts.

- Miscellaneous text changes, although proposed only for Community District 8, would nevertheless have citywide implications (such as lowering FAR in SNAD-2 districts, banning zoning lot mergers, restricting community facility FAR) and have also been deleted.
  
- The department has further agreed to undertake detailed study of the community's proposed expansions of the Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2) to determine each area's eligibility and suitability for inclusion within the SNAD-2. Special Natural Area Districts are mapped in areas that exhibit outstanding natural beauty, manifested by significant aquatic, biologic, geologic, and topographical features having ecological and conservation values and functions. Significant amounts of mature trees (especially of species native to the region), steeply sloping hillsides, and rock outcroppings are some of the natural features that must be present for an area to be considered for SNAD-2 designation.

The Department of City Planning will undertake additional analysis to see that areas proposed as SNAD-2 Districts meet the required criteria for such designation.

The Commission believes that, with these modifications, *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy, A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8* will serve as a useful guide to future policy actions in keeping with the purposes and intent of 197-a plans.

The Commission notes, however, that the Borough President and the Horace Mann-Barnard School have expressed concerns about the absence of significant natural features on the Horace Mann Campus. Further study of the area will have to demonstrate that significant numbers of natural features such as mature trees, hillsides and rock outcroppings are found on the site to warrant an expansion of the Special Natural Area District boundaries.

The Commission also notes the concerns expressed by the Fieldston School and welcomes its intent to preserve significant natural features as part of any campus redevelopment. If further study supports designation of the campus as a special natural area district, the Commission believes that designation would not place limits on the availability of floor area for development but, as is the intent of the school, would guide expansion to areas where disruption of the natural topography would be minimal.

Although the Commission paid particular attention to the land use-related proposals in its consideration of the plan, it takes note of the comprehensive scope of the plan, including recommendations for a variety of public investment and service improvements. The Commission urges other agencies to consider the plan as guidance for pertinent actions, but recognizes that many of the recommendations to enhance services, develop new infrastructure or to expand public access to recreational resources are subject to funding availability, competing citywide priorities, and city agency constraints.

During the course of its review of the plan, the department circulated the proposed plan to other city agencies affected by its recommendations. Highlights of those proposals and agency responses follow.

With respect to the preservation of places of historic value, the Community Board has recommended that southwestern portions of Van Cortlandt Park be designated as a Scenic Landmark. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has expressed concern about the potential effect of such a designation on their ability to make capital improvements in this heavily used portion of the park. If the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) supports historic designation, it will be essential to allow for necessary improvements while retaining the park's historic character. The LPC noted that it is considering an historic district designation in Fieldston and that it supports the recent designations of the Jerome Park reservoir to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Although the Commission supports the board's goal of expanded public access to potential recreational facilities, it shares the concerns expressed by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) about increasing access to portions of the Jerome Park Reservoir. As long as it remains an active reservoir, increased access could invite vandalism or other acts that could imperil the safety and ready distribution of New York City's water supply. DEP is urged to work with the Parks Department and local groups to provide improved safeguards along the perimeter of the reservoir while maintaining scenic amenities, especially in the areas where park property adjoins the reservoir.

In response to the plan's recommendation to re-establish a local Neighborhood Preservation Office for Marble Hill and Kingsbridge Heights, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) observes that the Neighborhood Preservation Program no longer exists but the Bronx Anti-Abandonment Office is available. HPD would be happy to work with City Planning and Community Board 8 to identify areas or sites where additional housing could be sensitively accommodated.

The Commission is pleased to note that several of the 197-a plan's open space recommendations are being implemented. DPR is planning to develop the Old Putnam Line right-of-way as a multi-use path and is preparing the ULURP application for its mapping as a park. With federal transportation funding for the development of the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail, DPR will design and install signage, trail markers and trailheads from the city's border to Bryant Park, a total of approximately 15 miles. The creation of waterfront access adjacent to the Riverdale Metro-North Station is funded by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and is to be constructed by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in 2004 and maintained by the DPR.

The Commission supports the plan's economic development goals which include the formation of Business Improvement Districts or merchants associations, improvement of the appearance of the district's commercial areas and the encouragement of small businesses. The Commission urges the Board to contact the Department of Small Business Services and work with the

Borough President's Office to implement these objectives.

Several of the 197-a plan's transportation recommendations have been or will be implemented soon. The reconstruction of Marble Hill Avenue was completed earlier in 2003. The 231<sup>st</sup> Street IRT station is currently under design for the installation of an ADA-compliant elevator, with construction anticipated to begin in late 2004. A contract has been awarded to repaint the elevated structure. However, the proposal to reconfigure the Broadway elevated structure would require extensive cost-benefit and planning analysis before a determination could be made regarding its feasibility and priority for public investment.

Finally, the Commission is pleased that the department has already begun to implement some of the plan's land use recommendations by initiating the analysis needed for strengthening the protections in the Special Natural Area District regulations. The department has also begun the field surveys to analyze selected rezonings, and will work with the Community Board 8 to finalize the proposals for 197-c applications. The Commission acknowledges the complexity of the effort, but nonetheless urges the department to complete the proposals, in close consultation with Community Board 8, and to present them for public review as expeditiously as possible.

## **RESOLUTION**

**RESOLVED**, that the City Planning Commission finds that the action described herein will have no significant effect on the environment; and be it further

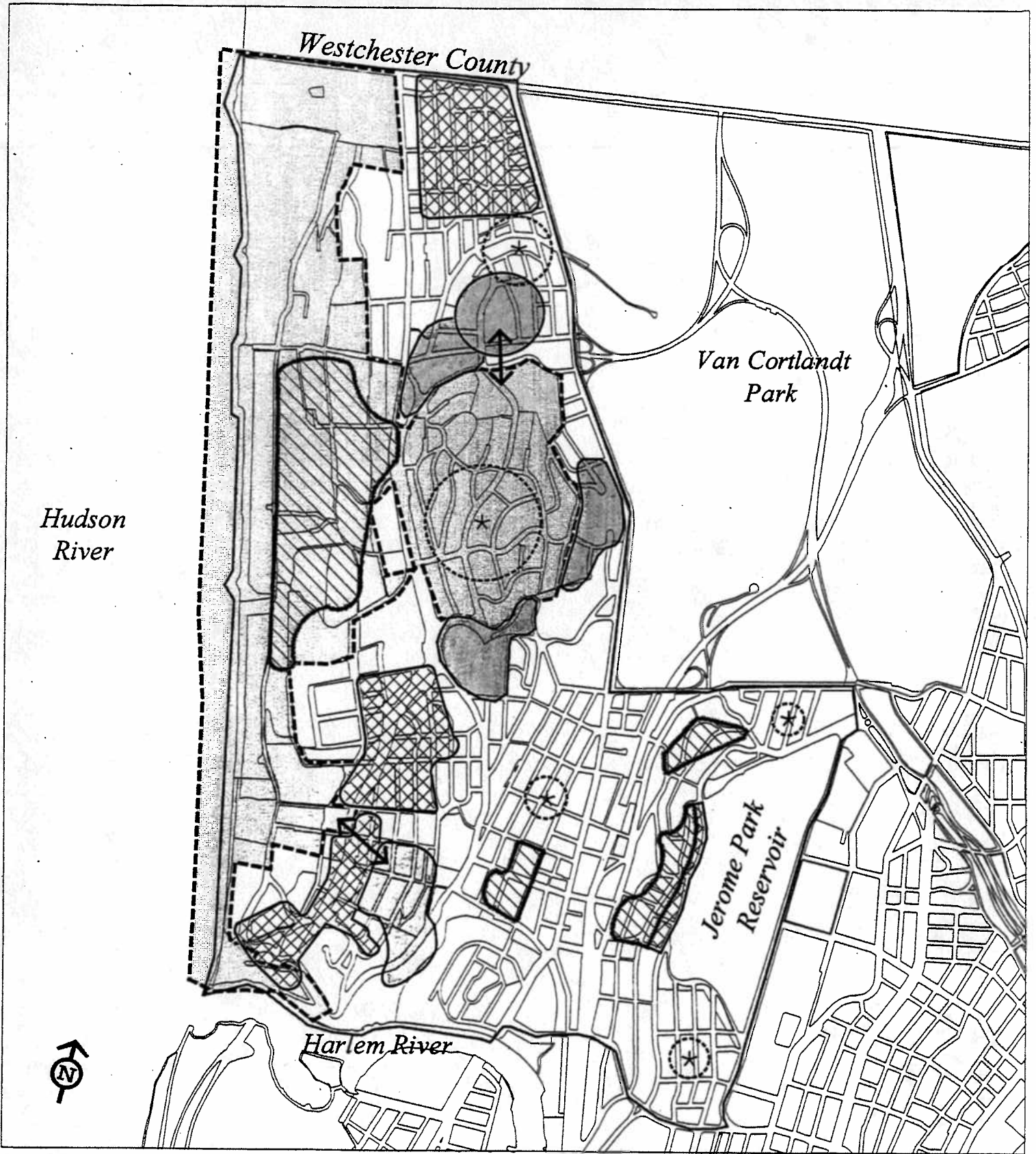
**RESOLVED**, that the City Planning Commission, in its capacity as the City Coastal Commission, has reviewed the waterfront aspects of this application and finds that the proposed action will be consistent with WRP policies, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, by the City Planning Commission, pursuant to Section 197-a of the New York City Charter, that the 197-a plan, *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy, A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8*, submitted by Bronx Community







Board 8, is approved with the modifications as detailed in the Community Board's letter of June 27, 2003, and as illustrated on the map entitled Bronx Community Board 8 197-a Planning Framework

The above resolution (N 000618 NPX), duly adopted by the City Planning Commission on October 22, 2003 (Calendar No. 22), is filed with the Office of the Speaker, City Council, and the Borough President in accordance with the requirements of Section 197-d of the New York City Charter.

**AMANDA M. BURDEN, AICP, Chair**  
**KENNETH J. KNUCKLES, Esq., Vice Chairman**  
**ANGELA M. BATTAGLIA, IRWIN G. CANTOR, P.E.,**  
**ANGELA R. CAVALUZZI, R.A., RICHARD W. EADDY, ALEXANDER GARVIN,**  
**JANE D. GOL, CHRISTOPHER KUI, JOHN MEROLO, KAREN A. PHILLIPS,**  
**DOLLY WILLIAMS, Commissioners**



### Bronx Community Board 8 197-a Planning Framework

-  rezone at reduced density
-  map contextual zoning at similar density
-  consider for future zoning study
-  existing Special Natural Area District (SNAD)
-  proposed SNAD extensions
-  Community District 8 Boundary





# COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8 BRONX

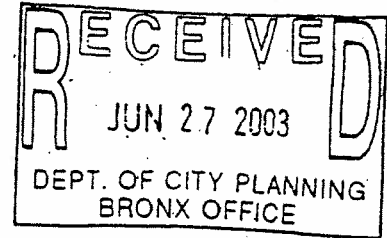
ATTACHMENT B

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Hon. Adolfo Carrion, Jr.  
BRONX BOROUGH PRESIDENT



Ms. Purnima Kapur  
Bronx Office New York City Department of City Planning  
One Fordham Plaza, Room 502  
Bronx, New York 10458

June 27, 2003

**RE: Clarification of Recommendations for Bronx Community Board #8  
Draft 197-a Plan, entitled *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Neighborhood  
Preservation Strategy***

Dear Ms. Kapur,

In response to our continuing dialogue on Bronx Community Board #8's 197-a plan and in advance of the City Planning Commission's deliberations on the plan, Bronx Community Board #8 would like to make the following clarifications regarding proposed zoning actions. We thank the Department of City Planning for its cooperation and guidance in the preparation of a community-based plan that will be a workable blueprint for future implementation. While we recognize that some of the Plan's recommendations as originally submitted may be inconsistent with City land use policy, we are pleased to have reached consensus on the majority of the plan's recommended actions and look forward to seeing future Department of City Planning proposals that will address the Board's objectives of preserving the scale and community character of the District's neighborhoods and protecting the natural and historic features that give the area its unique quality of life. Our Board's unanimous approval of the 197-a Plan on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2003 reflects the tremendous amount of work that has been put into the Plan by both the volunteers and staff of the Community Board and the staff of the Department of City Planning. Our comments relate to three major topics as follows:

1. Contextual Rezoning Recommendations

We recognize that references to particular proposed zoning districts are more appropriate for the 197-c process, which is a specific implementation scheme that will require more rigorous technical analysis and environmental review. Eight of the originally recommended 13 rezoning areas appear to merit further study according to the Department's established criteria for rezoning. For the remaining five areas, we trust that the modified language transmitted herein will address specific concerns of the Department of City Planning, as discussed at our series of recent meeting in May and

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June of this year. These five areas are considered to be part of a second tier of proposed rezoning actions to be addressed following the completion of the following eight initial rezoning actions. We urge the Department to work with CB8 on the zoning mapping actions that will achieve the following, based loosely on the boundaries identified in the Draft 197-a Plan.

#### Recommended Contextual Rezoning

The first phase of recommended zoning mapping actions involve eight of the initially proposed rezoning areas where the mismatch of existing zoning and the built context is strong enough to warrant implementation of mapping actions as soon as possible to protect the scale and character of these neighborhoods from development that would otherwise be permitted according to current zoning.

#### **Sub-Area 1 (Kingsbridge Heights Heath Avenue/Kingsbridge Terrace/Giles Place)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R6 to R5 is replaced with the following recommendation:

Portions of the area to the west of Sedgwick Avenue and Jerome Park Reservoir should be rezoned to a lower density residential district that reflects the height and density of the existing buildings in this area.

#### **Sub-Area 2 (Sedgwick Avenue, West 231<sup>st</sup> Street – Giles Place)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R6 to R6A is replaced with the following recommendation:

The Sedgwick Avenue corridor from approximately West 231<sup>st</sup> Street to Giles Place should be rezoned to a moderate density contextual district that will ensure that future development along this corridor maintains the low-to-mid-scale context of the existing buildings.

#### **Sub-Area 4 (Van Cortlandt Village Canon Place/Orloff Avenue)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R7-1 to R4A is replaced with the following recommendation:

The portions of Van Cortlandt Village in the vicinity of Canon Place and Orloff Avenue should be rezoned to a Lower Density Contextual Zoning District that would limit future residential development to detached buildings in order to ensure consistency with the low density, detached context of homes in this area.

#### **Sub-Area 7 (Corlear Avenue/West 230<sup>th</sup> Streets)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R6 to R4-1 is replaced with the following

recommendation:

The area in the general vicinity of Corlear Avenue and West 230<sup>th</sup> Streets should be rezoned to a lower density zoning district that would limit future residential development to either detached or semi-detached buildings consistent with the existing configuration and density of buildings in this area.

**Sub-Area 9 (North Riverdale West 259<sup>th</sup> Street to West 263<sup>rd</sup> Street)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R3-1 to R3A is replaced with the following recommendation:

The portions of North Riverdale generally between approximately West 259<sup>th</sup> Street and West 263<sup>rd</sup> Street should be rezoned to a Lower Density Contextual Zoning District that would limit future residential development to detached buildings consistent with the existing configuration and density of buildings in this area.

**Sub-Area 11 (Riverdale West 232<sup>nd</sup> Street to West 238<sup>th</sup> Street Vicinity)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R7-1 to R7A is replaced with the following recommendation:

The portions of Riverdale generally surrounding the Henry Hudson Parkway and including blocks to the east from approximately West 232<sup>nd</sup> to West 238<sup>th</sup> Streets should be rezoned to a moderate density contextual residential district that reflects the height and density of the existing buildings in this area.

**Sub-Area 12 (Riverdale West 240<sup>th</sup> Street to West 254<sup>th</sup> Street Vicinity)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R1-2 to R1-1 is replaced with the following recommendation:

The portions of western Riverdale from approximately West 240<sup>th</sup> Street to West 254<sup>th</sup> Street should be rezoned to the lowest density residential district to reflect the prevailing lot sizes of the buildings in this area. Further study is also recommended to the area directly to the north (extending to West 256<sup>th</sup> Street, and the west of Arlington Avenue).

**Sub-Area 13 (Spuyten Duyvil/Henry Hudson Parkway Corridor)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R6 to R6A is replaced with the following recommendation:

The portions of Spuyten Duyvil generally surrounding the Henry Hudson

Parkway south of West 232<sup>nd</sup> Street should be rezoned to a moderate density contextual district that will ensure that future development along this corridor preserves the low-to-mid-rise scale of the existing buildings.

#### Areas for Future Investigation for Contextual Rezoning

The following proposed rezonings are considered to be a lower priority than those rezoning areas described above since the percentages of compliance of these areas with the initially proposed zoning districts were found to be slightly lower than those of the rezoning areas described above. Further study is recommended to advance these rezonings based on adjusted zoning boundaries in order to achieve acceptable compliance rates.

#### **Sub- Area 3 (Kingsbridge Heights)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R6 to R4A is replaced with the following recommendation:

Appropriate portions of the interior blocks of Kingsbridge Heights south of the Jerome Park Reservoir, generally in the vicinity of Claflin Avenue and Webb Avenue south of West 197<sup>th</sup> Street, should be reexamined in the future to determine whether rezoning would be appropriate and if so to determine the portions of the originally proposed area that would better comply with the bulk requirements of a lower density contextual zoning district. If determined to be appropriate, this area should be rezoned to a Lower Density Contextual Zoning District that would limit future development to a detached configuration at the density of the existing buildings.

#### **Sub-Area 5 (Van Cortland Village Saxon Avenue)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R7-1 to R4A is replaced with the following recommendation:

Properties on the west side of Saxon Avenue in Van Cortlandt Village should be examined to address the mismatch between the current R7-1 District zoning, which permits all types of residential development at a maximum permitted FAR of 3.44, and the existing built form of the low density detached single family homes on this block, which mostly have existing FAR's of less than 1.0 (93%). This area should be considered for rezoning to a contextual zone at a reduced density that would be more in keeping with the prevailing detached context of this area.

#### **Sub-Area 6 (Kingsbridge Avenue – Irwin Avenue – 232<sup>nd</sup> to 235<sup>th</sup> Streets)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R4 to R4-1 is replaced with the following

recommendation:

Properties in the vicinity of Kingsbridge Avenue and Irwin Avenue from approximately West 232<sup>nd</sup> Street to West 235<sup>th</sup> Street should be examined in order to identify the portions of the originally proposed area that would better comply with the bulk requirements of a lower density contextual zoning district. New zoning is recommended for this modified area that would limit future residential development to detached or semi-detached homes consistent with the prevailing detached configuration and size of homes within this area.

#### **Sub-Area 8 (Fieldston)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R1-2 to R1-1 is replaced with the following recommendation:

The Fieldston neighborhood should be examined in order to identify portions of the originally proposed R1-1 rezoning area that would better comply with the lot size requirements of a large-lot district. New zoning is recommended for this modified area that would limit future residential development to single-family homes on lots of 10,000 square feet or more consistent with the prevailing density of development in this area. Such as rezoning is recommended to preserve the prevailing large-lot character of this area.

#### **Sub-Area 10 (North Riverdale 254<sup>th</sup> – 259<sup>th</sup> Streets)**

The recommendation to rezone this area from R3-2 to R3-1 is replaced with the following recommendation:

Portions of North Riverdale from approximately West 254<sup>th</sup> Street to West 259<sup>th</sup> Street should be examined in order to identify the portions of the originally proposed area that would better comply with the regulations of a lower density district that does not allow the waiver of height restrictions currently permitted under existing zoning. A future rezoning is recommended to preserve the prevailing low-scale character of this area. In addition, residents in this area have expressed concern over the density of recent development, indicating a need to examine the appropriateness of increasing lot size requirements in this area.

## **2. Special Natural Area District Issues**

Related to the Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2), we continue to advocate for zoning text revisions that would extend opportunities for Community Board review and input into SNAD-2 applications, strengthen SNAD-2 performance standards and include additional protection of steep slope areas, old growth trees and other natural features. We recognize that the Department of City Planning is in the process of revising the SNAD regulations related to these provisions, consistent with the recommendations of the 197-a

Plan.

For the proposed extensions of the SNAD-2 overlay district, we have solicited additional comments from both area residents and specific institutions whose properties would be affected by the proposed SNAD-2 extensions. Opinions on this aspect of the plan continue to be divided (see attached letters from Grace Belkin to Horace Mann School and Fieldston School). Residents have continued to call for stronger measures to limit development in areas characterized by old growth trees, rock outcrops and other natural features. Outreach to the Horace Mann School and Fieldston School, where SNAD-2 extensions are proposed, has indicated support for the intention to protect the natural environment but a reluctance to agree to measures that would limit their ability to expand in the future to meet their programmatic needs. We recognize the importance of both of these viewpoints and separate procedural concerns of the Department of City Planning and modify our proposed recommendations related to the SNAD-2 as follows:

**SNAD-2 Revisions to Protect stone wall, historic roads and other features that contribute to community character**

Areas currently mapped with the SNAD-2 overlay district are distinguished by an array of features that help to define the unique character of these areas in combination with the natural features that are present. However, we recognize the Department City Planning's concern over administering requirements to preserve things such as stone walls or historic roadway features. Therefore, until a feasible regulatory approach for preserving such features can be identified, we recommend that these features be preserved to the extent practicable through the other means. While no longer called for in the 197-a Plan through a zoning text amendment, the Community Board urges that agencies, developers and other organizations consider these unique features in the course of their future actions in the SNAD-2 area.

**Lowering FAR in the SNAD-2 District to 0.4 FAR**

We recognize the Department's concern that there is no zoning district in the city with a maximum allowable FAR as low as 0.4 FAR, and that the Commission would likely see this as a precedent that could have city-wide ramifications. Therefore, this recommendation is considered to be deleted from the 197-a Plan. However, it should be noted that the Land Use Committee of Community Board #8 continues to support this recommendation and would like to see this issue reexamined in the future because of the significant incursion of single-family homes that are in excess of the prevailing height and size of development in this area.

**Filing of Statement of Development Rights by SNAD-2 Community Facilities**

While we continue to urge local institutions to involve the Community Board from early on in the process of planning for expansions and alterations of their campuses, we recognize the Department's concern over the legal basis for requiring large-scale

community facilities and institutions to file statements with the City Planning Commission indicating their anticipated unused development rights in order to vest those development rights. Therefore, this recommendation is considered to be deleted from the Plan. However, we call on the Department to address, as part of the ongoing development of revisions to underlying community facility regulations, long-standing resident concerns over the neighborhood impacts of community facility expansion and development, as described in the 197-a Plan. In addition, Community Board #8 will continue to pursue discussions with local institutions over their future development potential and request information on their development plans on a voluntary. This has occurred successfully in several instances in the past.

### **Zoning Lot Mergers and Transfers of Development Rights**

We recognize that the Plan's recommendations related to Zoning Lot Mergers and Transfers of Development Rights are not implementable at only the local level. Recommendations to limit the increase in developable area permissible through the use of these zoning tools is considered to be deleted from the Plan.

### **SNAD-2 Extension Areas**

The specific boundaries proposed for extensions of the SNAD-2 District are replaced with a recommendation that the Department of City Planning consider extending SNAD-2 zoning to include areas such as the Vinmont area, areas around Tibbett Avenue and areas in the vicinity of Manhattan College Parkway. For the Edgehill area, we urge the Department of City Planning to examine a SNAD-2 extension area that would connect to nearby portions of the existing SNAD-2 area in order to avoid creation of an isolated SNAD-2 portion.

### **Hillsides Preservation District**

We recognize the Department's concern over the creation of multiple overlapping special purpose districts. Therefore, instead of the creation of a separate Special Hillsides Preservation District, we support the Department in its ongoing study of incorporating into the SNAD-2 the protections of steep slope areas now found in the Special Hillsides Preservation District mapped on portions of Staten Island.

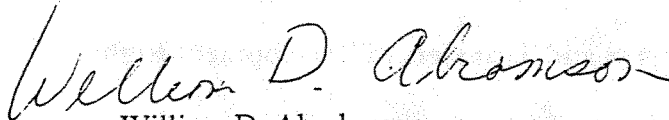
### **3. Special Scenic View District**

Because of the Department of City Planning's position that there is limited potential for mapping a scenic view district in the recommended areas to prevent the blocking of views, we urge that agencies and developers consult with the community before taking any action that might affect the valuable views of the Hudson River, the Jerome Park Reservoir and the Harlem River. While the mapping of Special Scenic View Districts may not be the appropriate tool to accomplish this objective, based on further discussions with Department of City Planning staff, it should be recognized that these views are an

important resource for the community and that that local residents would like to see them preserved from visual intrusion.

With these proposed changes, we once again thank the Department and the City Planning Commission for partnering with Community Board #8 to preserve its neighborhoods – from river to reservoir. We look forward to the completion of our Board's 197-a planning process and to the expedited implementation of the actions necessary to accomplish its goals.

Sincerely,



William D. Abrahamson  
Chairman



Mark Friedlander  
Chairman Elect

- C: Grace Belkin, District Manager  
Hon. Adolfo Carrion, Jr., Bronx Borough President  
David Schiff, Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.  
Josh Moreinis, Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc.  
Hon. G. Oliver Koppell, Councilman





# Section 3 Community Board's Proposed 197-a Plan

as submitted June 2000 and modified May 2002

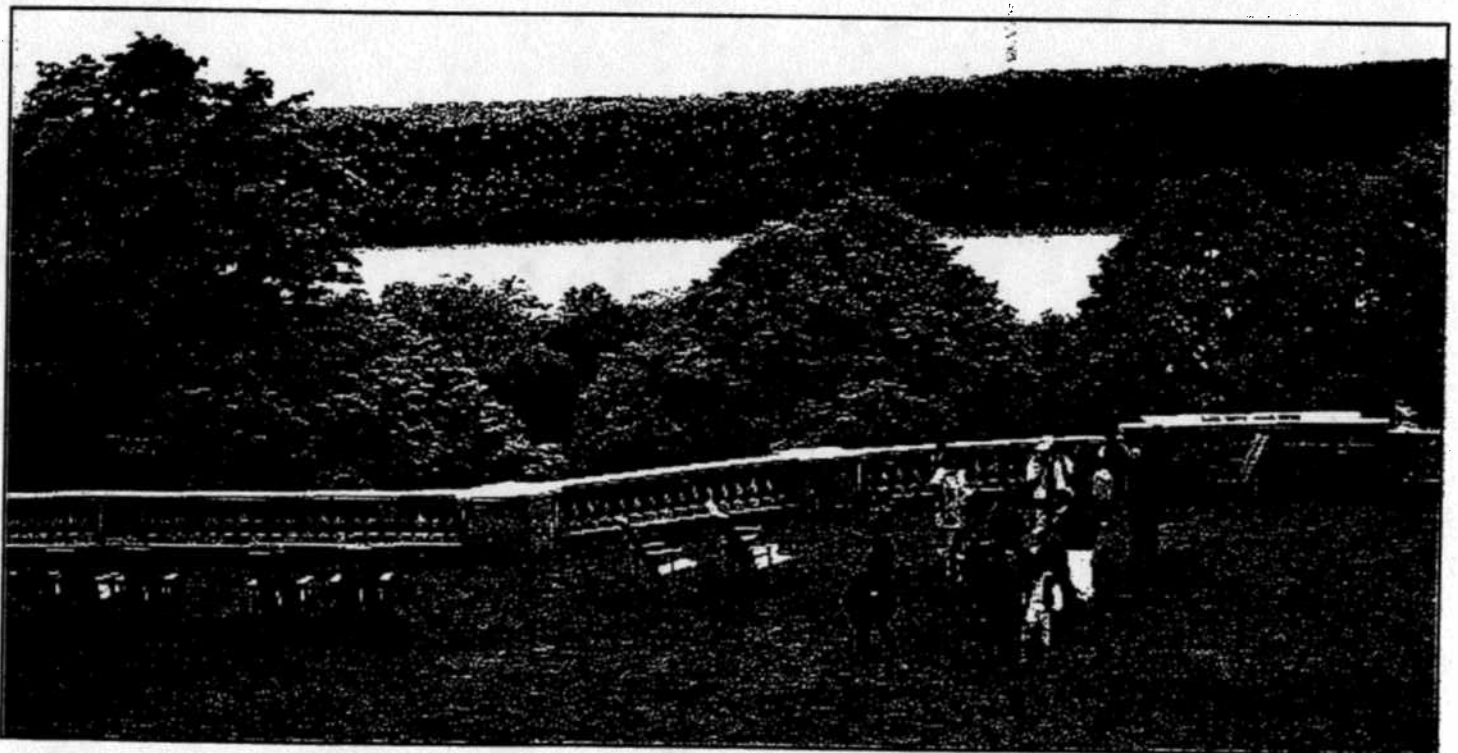
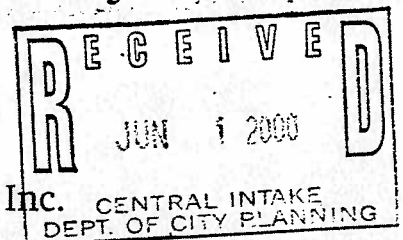


CD8 2000 **N000618NPX**  
**A RIVER TO RESERVOIR PRESERVATION STRATEGY**

*A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8*

Prepared by  
Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.  
and

Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc.



**CD8 2000:  
A RIVER TO RESERVOIR PRESERVATION STRATEGY**

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*A 197-a Community Plan for Bronx Community District 8*

**A 197-a Plan Submitted to:**  
New York City Department of City Planning  
Intake Officer  
22 Reade Street  
New York, New York 10007

**Submitted by:**  
Bronx Community Board No. 8  
5676 Riverdale Avenue  
Bronx, New York 10471  
Contact: Grace Belkin, District Manager

**Prepared by:**  
Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.  
and  
Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc.

**May 2000**

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## I. Executive Summary

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The following community plan, entitled *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy*, has been prepared pursuant to Section 197-a of the New York City Charter, which allows Community Boards to prepare local plans for approval by the City Council and the City Planning Commission. The Plan is intended to serve as a guideline for City agencies, promoting a vision for Community District #8's future that includes improving quality of life and upgrading particular areas of the community. A variety of planning proposals have been discussed in the Community District and the Plan builds on these previous efforts, as well as the input of local residents and leaders obtained through questionnaires, interviews, and a series of public hearings.

Issues identified in the 197-a planning process include concerns over changes to the scale and character of the area's neighborhoods, and the need to improve educational and employment opportunities, preserve historical resources, protect open space, and improve local commercial districts. Land use and zoning issues critical to the future of the district also relate to transfers-of-development-rights and community facility development.

Area rezonings comprise an important component of this Plan's overall strategy. Specific areas within Community District #8 are identified for further study to determine if rezonings may be appropriate to better match underlying zoning with existing built form. Future zoning change applications will be required for these areas, requiring their own public hearings and environmental reviews. Preservation zoning actions can include stricter height limits, for example, or requiring that future development match a predominant housing type, such as detached housing. These residential rezonings for the most part entail equivalent contextual zoning districts rather than significantly changing the overall development capacity of the district. This approach builds on the successful lower density contextual zoning program that the City has been implementing since the late 1980's. Additional zoning revisions developed as part of the City's ongoing effort to update and revise the New York City Zoning Resolution will also be required.

Along with preservation zoning, the Plan includes recommendations to upgrade housing and increase access to housing for all age and income groups. A housing revitalization strategy is proposed for southern areas of Community District #8, where housing conditions vary the most. At the same time, increased enforcement of illegal conversions of single and two-family homes and housing overcrowding are proposed to protect quality of life within the district.

Other land use and zoning related recommendations of this 197-a Plan include protecting scenic views and strengthening the Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2) regulations. The Natural Area District is proposed for expansion, and some areas within the SNAD-2 are proposed for rezoning from R1-2 to R1-1, requiring lot sizes for future development more

in line with current conditions. Procedural changes for the review of developments or alterations of natural or historical features within the SNAD-2 are also proposed.

Parks and open space planning is another focus of the 197-a Plan, including improving the old Putnam Railroad right-of-way as an enhanced multi-use trailway, working with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, the Bronx Advisory Task Force on the Hudson River Valley Greenway, and local open space advocates. The Jerome Park Reservoir presents an ideal opportunity for the creation of new active and passive recreational facilities. The Plan supports ongoing efforts to open the Reservoir's banks for public access and recreation. Actions are also recommended to improve Van Cortlandt Park as a cultural and historical resource for area residents, in addition to expanding its range of recreational facilities.

The Plan's recommendations also relate to improvements to the area's commercial corridors, including supporting the implementation of area Business Improvement Districts. Improved pedestrian conditions such as lighting and landscaping are needed, along with additional parking and access improvements.

Social services, education, employment opportunities, and transportation are the final set of issues that the Plan addresses. Among other actions, recommendations include expanding and relocating area libraries, examining the current configuration of the School District, enhancing services for the area's growing elderly, increasing after-school programs for area youths, and exploring the potential for improvements to technology resources, linking students and residents with area school and library resources, and establishing community-based centers for on-line access.

## II. Background and Goals

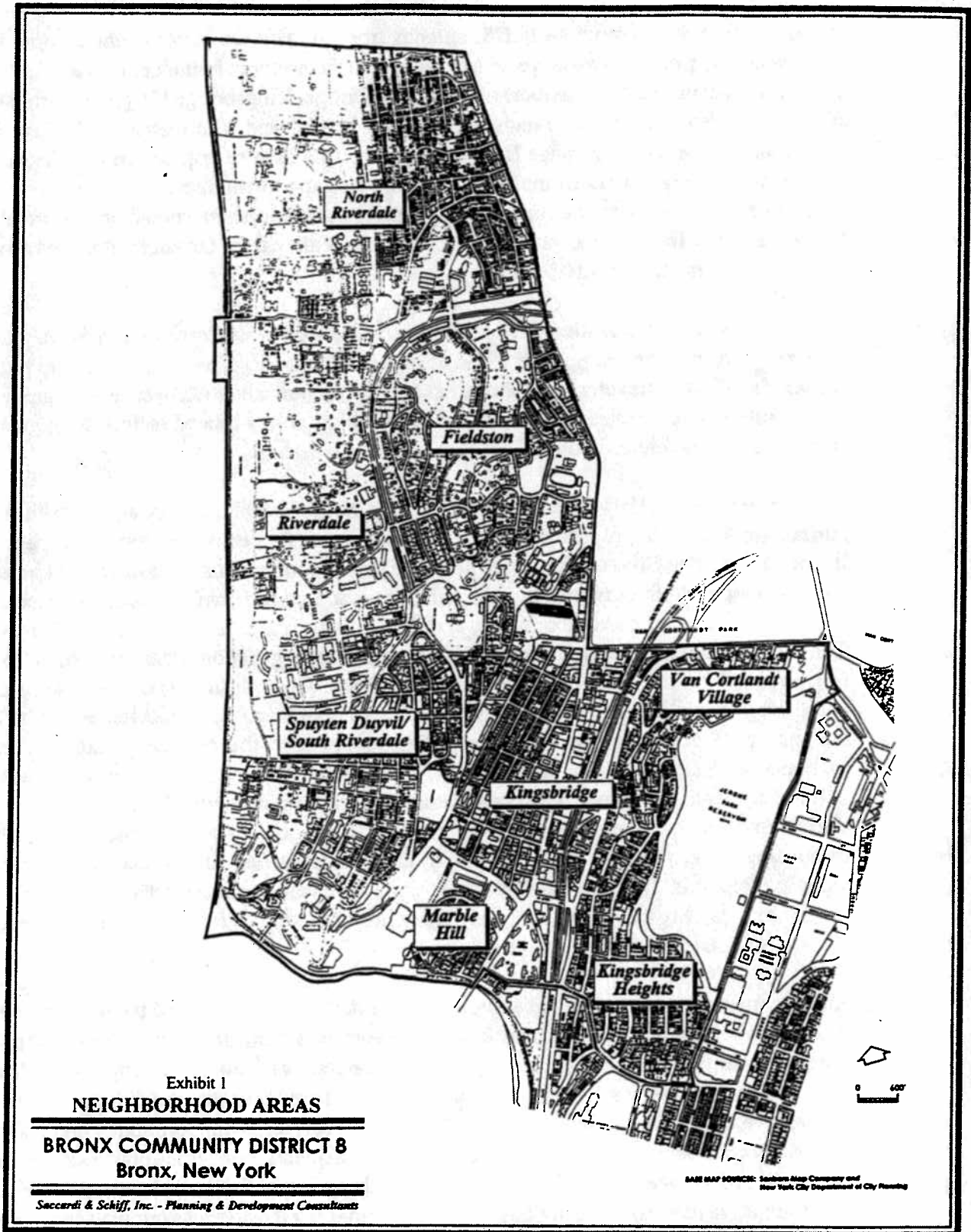
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Bronx Community District #8 (CD8) extends from the Hudson River to the Jerome Park Reservoir, and from the East River at Marble Hill to the northern boundary of Van Cortlandt Park. It encompasses the neighborhoods of Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights, Marble Hill, North Riverdale, Riverdale, Fieldston, Spuyten Duyvil and Van Cortlandt Village (see Neighborhood Areas map, page II-2) and is home to a diverse population of 95,500. Its unique mix of neighborhoods includes older mid-rise apartment districts and lower density neighborhoods built in the early part of this century as development spread northward along the IRT subway line. As the gateway to the Hudson Valley from the south, it is also an area of spectacular natural beauty.

This community plan, entitled *CD8 2000: A River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy*, has been prepared pursuant to Section 197-a of the New York City Charter and seeks to protect the area's unique character and natural assets. Its recommendations serve as a guide for development, and for directing resources and shaping policy related to this distinguished section of the northwest Bronx.

When amended in 1991, the New York City Charter established broad guidelines for community boards to prepare plans for their districts, or for certain sections, or aspects, of their districts. The Community Board #8 197-a plan is comprehensive in nature, addressing issues and opportunities related to parks and open space, commercial and social services, the character of the area's neighborhoods, and the ability of the area to absorb future growth. The Plan includes recommendations for specific zoning actions that will need to be implemented by the City Planning Department and Commission, such as zoning map changes and zoning text amendments to control development and its associated impacts. The recommended rezoning actions are intended to preserve the existing context of each particular neighborhood. For the most part, they introduce equivalent contextual zones that will not significantly reduce the area's overall development capacity. By comprehensively analyzing the district's existing zoning in relation to the existing scale and configuration of its housing stock, a number of rezoning study areas are identified, as well as potential zoning mapping solutions. There are also proposals to preserve view corridors, address impacts from community facility development, and strengthen protections for the Riverdale Special Natural Area District.

Along with zoning actions aimed at protecting the scale and character of the area, the *River to Reservoir Plan* addresses a number of City agency actions in a broad-based effort to improve quality of life and protect the scenic character of New York City's only lower density Hudson River waterfront community. Unique features of the area that the Plan seeks to preserve and enhance include the Jerome Park Reservoir, Van Cortlandt Park, and the Broadway commercial corridor. The Plan addresses residents' concerns about access to, and the quality of services in the district. Finally, roadway safety, improved access to parking, and alternative transportation modes are recommended for the district's circulation network, which ties together its various neighborhoods and activity centers.



## *Background and Goals*

The Plan is organized by functional areas including land use, community services, and open space. It is the synthesis of these various elements that establishes the area's ambiance and "sense of place." Implementing the Plan's recommendations will protect these features and natural assets, such as maintaining views of the Palisades and waterfront areas and preserving the leafy environs surrounding the Jerome Park Reservoir, Marble Hill, Kingsbridge, and Riverdale. The Plan also seeks to enhance economic, cultural, and social opportunities for area residents through providing capital improvements, upgrading the area's schools and libraries and fostering linkages with local institutions. Goals for the 197-a Plan have emerged with the input of residents, Community Board members, and community leaders, and through a series of public hearings held between January and June of 1999. The underlying goals for the 197-a Plan include:

- *Preserve the scale and character of area neighborhoods;*
- *Strengthen protections for sensitive natural features including steep slope areas, mature trees, water features, and the surrounding contexts of these features;*
- *Improve the appearance and economic vitality of local commercial districts;*
- *Foster economic opportunities and improve access for all segments of the population to cultural and educational facilities;*
- *Create additional recreational resources, enhance existing parks, and promote the greening of major corridors;*
- *Preserve, and educate the public about, historical resources.*



*Preserving the diversity of existing housing scales and types is an important goal for Community District #8.*

### III. Profile of Bronx Community District #8

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#### A. Demographic and Housing Profile

Bronx Community District #8's population is as ethnic, racially, and economically diverse as the composition of its housing stock, which includes high-rise condominium and public housing complexes, historic small home and apartment districts, and areas of large lot single-family homes. It is estimated that the overall population has remained fairly stable over the last decade, decreasing by only one percent, from 97,030 persons in 1990, to an estimated 95,600 in 1998. Estimated 1998 median household income for the district was approximately \$40,500. Demographic projections indicate that the trend of population decrease in Community District #8 will level off, with a projected year 2003 total population for the district of approximately 95,250.<sup>1</sup> (See population tables on page III-4).

The median age of residents in Community District #8 is estimated to have risen to 40.3 years from 38.2 years between 1990 and 1998. Already in 1990, 21 percent of the total population was composed of persons 65 years old or above, as compared to the Borough of the Bronx, which had only 12 percent in this age category, and New York City, which had 13 percent. The increase in senior population in Community District #8 is expected to continue, with the year 2003 median age projected at 41.8 years old. At the same time, public and private school enrollments in grades K-8 rose by 15 percent between 1990 and 1995<sup>2</sup>, and children between the ages of 5 and 14 are expected to comprise 12 percent of the District's population in the year 2003, as opposed to 10 percent in 1990.<sup>3</sup> This changing demographic profile suggests a need for enhanced facilities and programs to serve both the young and the old.

Comparisons of other demographic indicators from the 1980 and 1990 censuses reflect an increasingly diverse and growing District. The number of persons of Hispanic origin grew by 57 percent between 1980 and 1990. As of 1990, the area had a higher percentage of high school graduates (75 percent) than the Borough of the Bronx or New York City, and a lower percentage of persons living below the poverty line (13 percent), though levels of income vary among different parts of the District. Total housing units, ranging from single-family homes to group quarters such as nursing homes, increased at a rate (2.6 percent) higher than any other Bronx community district or the city as a whole.<sup>4</sup> This growth and the skilled labor force characteristics of the area, as illustrated by its high levels of educational attainment, are indications of its continued attractiveness as a place to live.

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<sup>1</sup> Claritas, Inc., 1998.

<sup>2</sup> New York City Department of City Planning.

<sup>3</sup> Claritas, Inc., 1998.

<sup>4</sup> New York City Department of City Planning, *Bronx Community District Needs Statement, 1994*, p. 231.



*The neighborhood character of Kingsbridge is defined by its low scale of housing and the Broadway commercial district, with its ethnic character and smaller retail shops.*





*The Fieldston neighborhood is part of the Riverdale Special Natural Area District.*



*Sedgwick Avenue has an open space character that is enhanced by old-growth trees, low and mid-rise housing, and the adjacent Jerome Park Reservoir.*



Table III-1: Population Change by Race and Hispanic Origin

Category	1980	1990	Number Change	Percent Change
Total	98,274	97,030	-1,244	(1.3)
White Non-Hispanic	69,317	57,310	-12,007	(17.3)
Black Non-Hispanic	9,604	11,364	1,760	18.3
Hispanic Origin	15,279	23,913	8,634	56.5
Asian, Pac Island	3,705	4,051	346	9.3
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	102	169	67	65.7
Other Non-Hispanic	267	223	-44	(16.5)

Source: *Community District Needs, FY 1994*, The City of New York, 1994, pp 235-239 Note: CD8 totals differ slightly from Claritas totals due to criteria for inclusion of split census tracts.

Table III-2: Household/Population Trends and Projections

Category	1980	1990	% Change 1980-1990	1998 Estimate	% Change 1990-1998	2003 Projection	% Change 1998-2003
Population	97,875	96,573	(1.3)	95,586	-1.0	95,249	(0.4)
Households	40,121	40,113	0	39,383	-1.8	39,253	(0.3)
Families	26,310	24,249	(7.8)	23,420	-3.4	23,109	1.3
Housing Units	41,047	42,051	2.4	41,469	-1.4	41,326	(0.03)
Group Quarter							
Population	4,762	5,580	17.2	5,626	0.8	5,642	0.3
Household Size	2.32	2.27	(2.3)	2.28	0.7	2.28	(0.1)

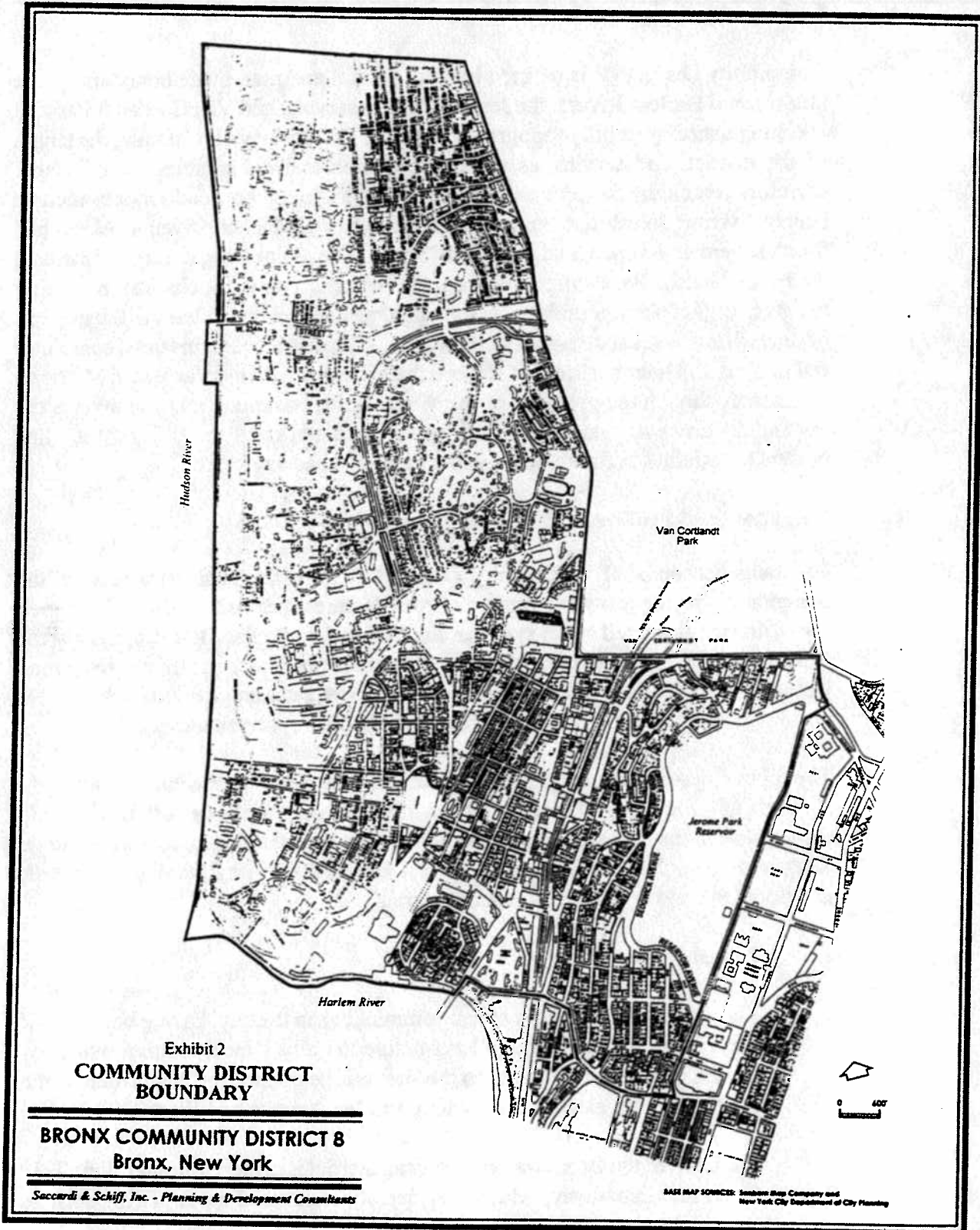
Source: Claritas Inc., 1999

Note: Claritas totals differ slightly from *Community District Needs* totals due to criteria for inclusion of split census tracts.

Table III-3: Age Characteristics of the Population

Age	1990 % of Total	1998 Estimated % of Total	2003 Projected % of Total
Total	96,573	95,586	95,249
Under 5	6.3	5.9	5.7 +
5 to 17	13.1	14.7	15.4
18 to 29	17.7	14.2	12.8
30 to 44	22.4	22.3	21.2
45 to 59	14.4	17.2	19.6
60 to 74	14.7	13.7	13.2
75 +	11.2	12.1	12.3
Median Age	38.2	40.3	44

Source: Claritas, Inc. 1999.



**B. Community Framework**

Community District #8 is defined by both natural and man-made boundaries - the Hudson and Harlem Rivers, the Jerome Park Reservoir, and Van Cortlandt Park. It is distinguished by its hilly topography, with the Broadway valley running the length of the district, and serving as the transportation and commercial spine. Other corridors containing concentrations of shopping and neighborhood services include Bailey Avenue, Johnson Avenue, Kingsbridge Road, Mosholu Avenue, North and South Riverdale Avenue, and West 231<sup>st</sup> Street. The Major Deegan Expressway and the Henry Hudson Parkway extend from the Harlem River to the city line, providing excellent regional automobile access, though raising concerns related to the impacts of through traffic on abutting residential areas. The district contains three commuter rail stations and four mass transit stations that provide convenient access to Midtown Manhattan, though the presence of the Metro-North commuter rail line divides the community from its waterfront, and the elevated tracks of the IRT subway line present constraints to future development along Broadway.

**C. Neighborhood Profiles and Planning Factors**

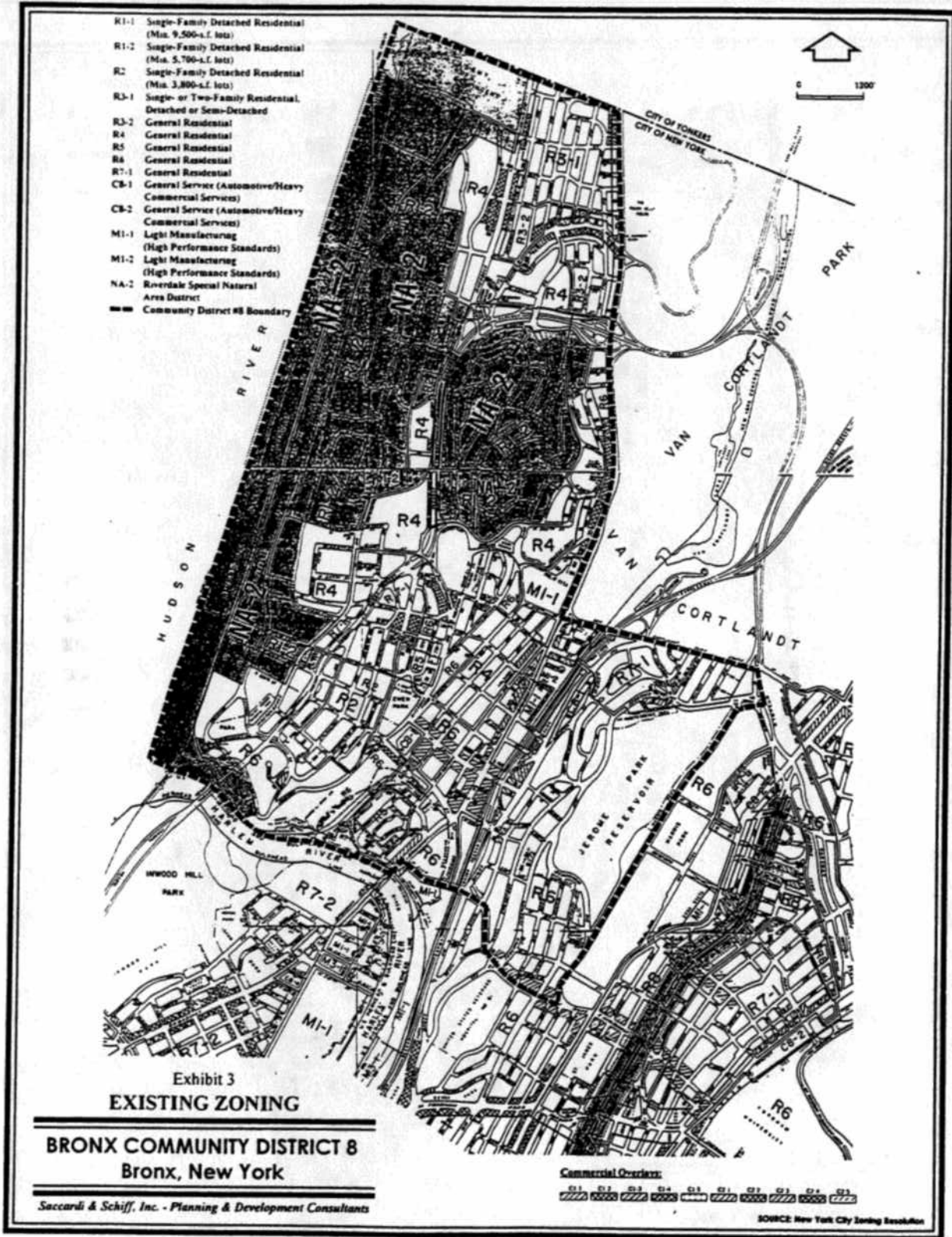
The neighborhoods of Community District #8 form the basic structure of the community, having grown up around historic features such as Broadway, Frederick Law Olmsted-designed street systems, the former Jerome Park Racetrack (now the Reservoir), and early planned suburban developments. Interspersed are renowned institutions including private schools, religious retreats, and health facilities that serve regional populations and provide valuable open space character.

The following section describes each of the main neighborhoods within Community District #8 and the planning factors that form the basis of this Plan's recommendations. This description is divided between the Fieldston, Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village, Marble Hill, North Riverdale, Riverdale, and Spuyten Duyvil/South Riverdale environs.

**1. Kingsbridge**

Kingsbridge is one of the oldest communities in the city, having been part of the Village of Kingsbridge long before the area's incorporation into New York City. Its name refers to the first bridge connecting Manhattan to the mainland, built at what is now Kingsbridge Avenue and West 230<sup>th</sup> Street.

The heart of the Broadway commercial district is centered around West 231<sup>st</sup> Street and Broadway, with lower density residential areas of Kingsbridge



*Profile of Bronx Community District #8*

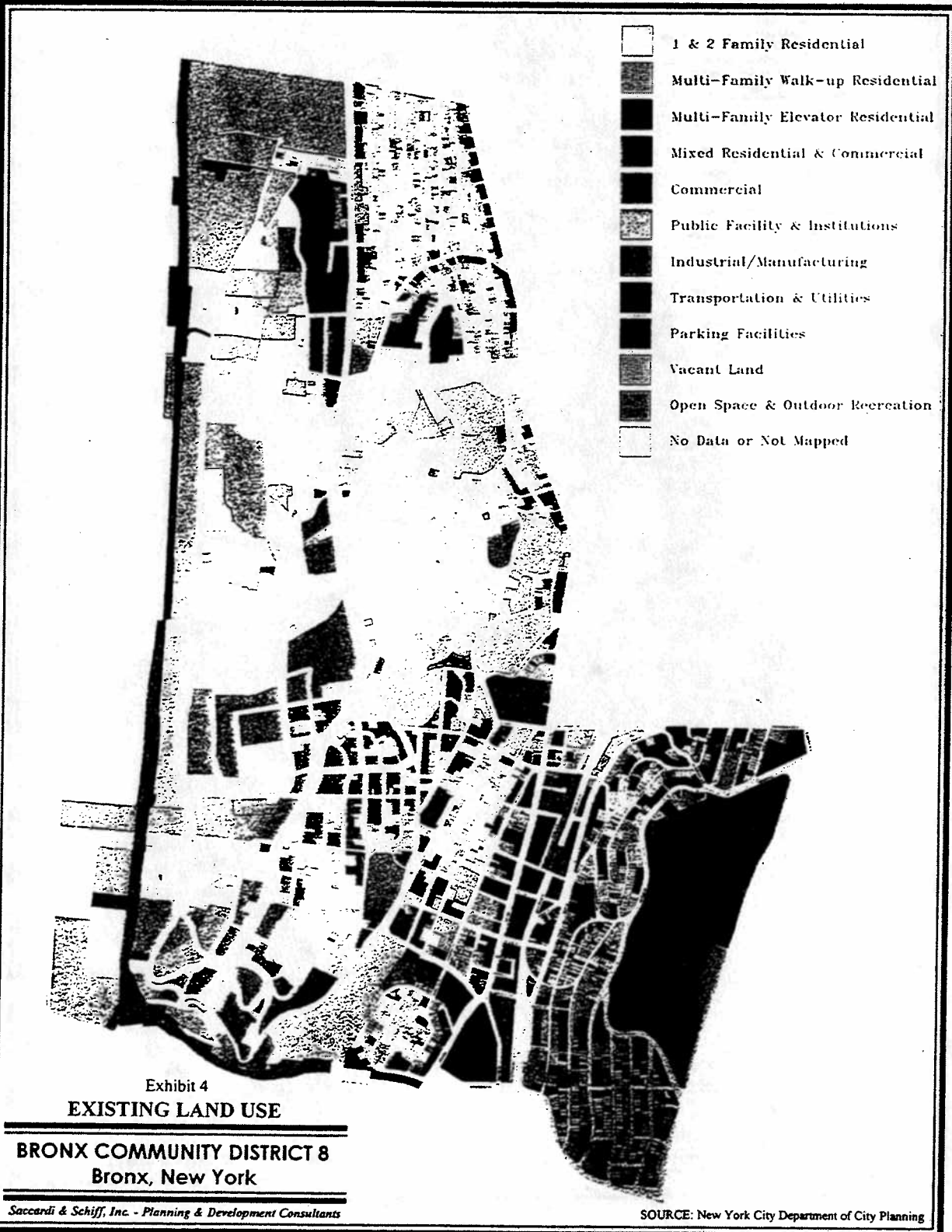


Exhibit 4  
EXISTING LAND USE

**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8**  
Bronx, New York

*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants*

SOURCE: New York City Department of City Planning

located between approximately Irwin Avenue and Broadway. Kingsbridge is predominantly zoned R4, permitting all types of low density housing, and R6, permitting medium density development, typically ranging from between three and 12 stories in height (see Existing Zoning map, page III-7 and Existing Land Use map, page III-8). Some R4 zoned blocks are characterized by detached and semi-detached homes, while three blocks south of West 231<sup>st</sup> Street contain mostly single-family detached homes, though they are zoned R6, potentially permitting the replacement of these homes with much denser and bulkier development.

## **2. Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village**

Kingsbridge Heights and Van Cortlandt Village comprise the areas to the west of the Jerome Park Reservoir, and include a range of housing types, from low density homes, to mid-rise pre-war apartment buildings, and high-rise residential towers. Kingsbridge Heights extends north of Kingsbridge Road into the area west of the Jerome Park Reservoir where narrow, winding streets were laid out by Frederick Law Olmsted, the landscape architect of Central Park. The area has experienced an influx of younger families with school age children. The area also contains numerous historic sites related to the Revolutionary War and to the early development of the city.

Comprising the southeastern quadrant of the Community District, the Kingsbridge Heights environs present opportunities for the upgrading of housing and commercial uses. Persistent graffiti problems along Kingsbridge Road suggest a need for the organization of area businesses to address this quality of life issue and other security concerns. Housing deterioration is evident in the area north of Kingsbridge Road, suggesting the need for a targeted housing revitalization strategy by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

New recreational facilities have been proposed in Kingsbridge, including reuse of the Old Putnam Line abandoned railroad right-of-way parallel to the Major Deegan Expressway. This right-of-way could include a linear open space/bicycle path that could potentially head west just below 225th Street, with connections to the Broadway Bridge and the future Hudson River Valley Greenway route (see Parks and Open Space recommendations, Chapter VII).

Kingsbridge Heights also has critical issues related to the Jerome Park Reservoir and the protection of the adjoining community

character. This landmark-eligible element of the New York City water supply system was considered as a potential site for a water filtration plant in 1998, underscoring the vulnerability of the scenic views and historic context associated with the Reservoir, i.e., from Old Fort Four Park overlooking the Reservoir. The Jerome Park Conservancy has proposed that the reservoir and its surrounding land be designated as parkland and considered for designation as a scenic landmark. In this area, the expansion of a nursing home on Giles Place has also raised concerns on the part of neighborhood residents, with calls for the downzoning of blocks in this area. The Department of City Planning's 1993 study of rezoning possibilities in this area<sup>5</sup> did not result in downzoning actions, though certain blocks were identified as meeting the criteria for rezoning to R5 from R6 and R7-1 in order to protect the scale and character of the area.

Existing zoning within this area is predominantly R6, with R7-1 medium density apartment house districts located directly south of Van Cortlandt Park in the area referred to as Van Cortlandt Village, and a C8-1 commercial district facing Bailey Avenue between West 234<sup>th</sup> Street and West 238<sup>th</sup> Street. Some areas are built considerably below the permitted bulk and density of existing zoning. Others maintain a distinct mid-rise context, though existing zoning permits the construction of tower-type development. Commercial overlay zones exist along West 231st Street, on Kingsbridge Road (between Sedgwick Avenue and Goulden Avenue, and at Bailey Avenue), and at the intersection of Van Cortlandt Avenue and Sedgwick Avenue. These C1 commercial overlays permit the types of local retail and service uses found along these corridors.

### **3. Marble Hill**

Marble Hill is a compact residential community and an important gateway to the Bronx from Manhattan. It is the only area of Community District #8 that is in easy walking distance of both Metro-North and the IRT subway line. Although separated from the Harlem River by the railroad tracks and an interceding high-rise apartment building, Marble Hill is a waterfront community that possesses limited views of the Harlem and Hudson Rivers. The area's housing stock includes Victorian wood frame homes, mid-rise Art Deco style apartments, the New York City Housing Authority's Marble Hill Houses (located on the east side of Broadway between West 225<sup>th</sup> and West 230<sup>th</sup> Streets), and high rise residential development. Marble Hill had once

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<sup>5</sup> Reservoir West Rezoning Study

been connected to Manhattan and remains part of the Borough of Manhattan, although it receives all City services through Bronx service districts.

The narrow, winding streets and steep slope areas between Terrace View Avenue and Marble Hill Avenue give Marble Hill a unique community character, but also present limitations on development. These development constraints were recognized in the 1990 rezoning of the upper elevations of Marble Hill from R6 to R5. An R6 district covers areas around Broadway and 225th Street, while the R7-1 zone covers a single block adjacent to the Harlem River now developed with a high-rise apartment tower.

Adjacent to the east of Marble Hill's residential areas is John F. Kennedy High School, the city's largest high school, with a 1998 total enrollment of 4,484 students.<sup>6</sup> Residents and community leaders have expressed concerns about spillover effects of high school students who pass through the neighborhood on their way to and from school. There is also a need for increased maintenance and improved aesthetic conditions in commercial areas, particularly around the 225th Street IRT station, where graffiti and poor sidewalk conditions detract from visual quality.

Other issues in Marble Hill relate to community revitalization and the improvement of housing conditions. The Marble Hill Neighborhood Improvement Corporation works with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development and the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal on repair assistance programs. Increased code enforcement is needed. Overcrowding of doubled-up apartments is an additional concern. Given the higher percentage of residents below the age of 18 within Marble Hill and its lower income levels, there is also a need for increased support for the efforts of community groups active in youth and social programs, such as the Marble Hill Houses Tenants Association.

Quality of life issues are a major concern in Marble Hill, including the need for improved maintenance of streets and sidewalks, and the greening of the community in general. Specific issues identified in Marble Hill include the following:

- While mass transit access is good, the 225<sup>th</sup> Street elevated train station is not served by an escalator, limiting access for seniors in particular.

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<sup>6</sup> Marvin Jacobs, New York City Board of Education, telephone interview, 6/17/99.



- The area is considered to be safe, but there is a need for additional "beat patrol" officers.
- Aesthetic improvements are needed along the Broadway corridor. This can include landscaping and maintenance improvements for the Marble Hill Houses, as well as landscaping and street furnishing improvements within the Broadway commercial district. Exterior Street, at the neighborhood's eastern edge, suffers from poor streetscape conditions and is in need of improved maintenance and sanitation.
- The columns and overhead tracks of the elevated IRT subway diminish the visual quality of the area and lack adequate maintenance.
- Noise from the elevated track along Broadway is a persistent concern.
- Fencing is needed for the 225th Street IRT Station.

#### **4. North Riverdale**

North Riverdale is a low density neighborhood located generally north of the Henry Hudson Parkway. Riverdale Avenue is its local retail center, with additional commercial uses located on Mosholu Avenue and Broadway. North Riverdale abuts the city line, presenting issues related to cross-border impacts from development within the City of Yonkers. Institutional uses within the North Riverdale environs include the Russian Residence, formerly known as the Russian Mission. This building raises issues regarding the scale and visual compatibility of community facility uses developed pursuant to liberal community facility zoning provisions.

An area of several dozen blocks between Broadway and Riverdale Avenue in North Riverdale is currently zoned R3-1, with approximately one dozen blocks to the south of West 259th Street surrounding Mosholu Avenue being zoned R3-2. Major corridors in this area are zoned for greater densities, with Riverdale Avenue and Mosholu Avenue being zoned R4 with commercial overlays. Broadway is zoned R6, with commercial overlays present at Mosholu Avenue and north of West 261st Street.

Current zoning regulations permit the development of housing in some areas of North Riverdale that could potentially be out of scale and character with the existing pattern of development. There is a consistent low scale character

on large portions of the R3-2 zoned blocks north and south of Mosholu Avenue where zoning regulations could permit the waiver of height limits for new development. In addition, most of the R3-1 zoned blocks in the area have a consistent pattern of detached homes, although R3-1 regulations permit semi-detached housing types as well as detached. This suggests the potential application of contextual zoning in this area, limiting new development to detached homes to prevent the demolition of existing homes and their replacement with bulkier buildings that could break up the continuity of the existing streetscape.

## **5. Riverdale**

The Riverdale environs generally include areas to the west of the Henry Hudson Parkway above Manhattan College Parkway, and areas to the east of the Henry Hudson Parkway south of Manhattan College Parkway extending to approximately Johnson Avenue and Riverdale Avenue. This area contains a diverse range of housing types and development intensities, with higher density mid-rise apartment districts east of the Henry Hudson Parkway, blocks of apartment towers located between West 236<sup>th</sup> and West 246<sup>th</sup> Streets, and low density single-family homes and estate residential areas located in the northern and western sections. Health and education-related community facilities comprise a large portion of the area's land uses.

Riverdale Park runs parallel to the Metro-North Railroad right-of-way and the waterfront. The Metro-North right-of-way is a substantial barrier to access to the Hudson River. Riverdale Park remains in a predominantly natural state. Residents have expressed opposition to creating new active recreational facilities within the park that could jeopardize natural features, such as a bicycle route.

Most of Riverdale is designated as the Riverdale Special Natural Area District (NA-2) and, along with portions of the Fieldston and Spuyten Duyvil neighborhoods, is subject to special review procedures for certain development proposals in order to protect the unique natural features of these areas. Greater protections have been sought for these natural features, both procedurally, related to the specific guidelines of the NA-2, and through expansion of the area covered by the NA-2 district.

Most of the western section of Riverdale is zoned R1-2. The R1-2 District is one of the lowest density residential districts in the city and is appropriate

for large lot residential areas that are remote from transit lines, and whose residents primarily rely on private automobiles.

Riverdale also contains medium density residential districts surrounding the Henry Hudson Parkway corridor. These include R4, R6 and R7-1 districts. Existing development in these areas from West 232nd to West 239th Streets for the most part includes mid- and low-rise apartments with high-rise development concentrated to the west of Independence Avenue and directly fronting on the Parkway. Existing zoning would permit the construction of tower-type development in some predominantly mid-rise areas, raising concerns over impacts on light and air, and community character. The recent construction of a high-rise senior housing development near the Henry Hudson Parkway was achieved through a zoning lot merger action. Residents have expressed concerns over the use of zoning lot mergers, and the similar practice of transfer of development rights in order to achieve greater height and bulk.

Riverdale also has extensive waterfront areas. Although special Waterfront Zoning Regulations enacted in 1993 regulate development on waterfrontage blocks, there is limited applicability of the Waterfront Zoning Regulations to Riverdale since blocks separated from the waterfront by an intervening public street, such as Palisade Avenue, are exempt from these regulations. Also, development in R1 to R5 districts, other than large-scale residential development, is exempt from the Waterfront Zoning requirements. Additional controls on development are therefore needed in Riverdale to protect its unique qualities, such as scenic views of the Palisades and the Hudson River.

There are also opportunities to improve direct public access to the Hudson River within Riverdale. The Bronx Advisory Committee to the Hudson River Valley Greenway has recommended river access at the Riverdale Station (see Chapter VII, Parks and Recreation).

The potential for the expansion of community facilities and further community facility development utilizing zoning lot mergers and the community facilities bonus has raised concerns about the future form of Riverdale. The northwestern corner of the area, where three of the largest institutional properties with expansion potential are located, is particularly vulnerable to such development. These include the Hebrew Home for the Aged, the College of Mount Saint Vincent, and the Passionist Fathers of Riverdale New York, Inc. While these institutions have been good neighbors



*The New York City Housing Authority's Marble Hill Houses complex.*



*Improved pedestrian safety and sidewalk conditions are needed to link major activity centers.*

to the community in the past, their long term needs could potentially result in development proposals utilizing the above-described zoning tools. Area institutions have expressed a desire to maintain their development rights under existing zoning, suggesting the need for a solution that protects the future viability of these institutions, as well as the surrounding neighborhood character.

Riverdale also possesses a wealth of historic resources, including the District's only New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission-designated Historic District, the Riverdale Historic District. Many other sites eligible for designation as landmarks have not been designated, resulting in calls for additional efforts to preserve the area's historic resources .

**6. Fieldston**

Fieldston is an historic, low density residential community defined by the boundaries of the Fieldston Property Owners Association, which is responsible for its privately-owned streets. The boundaries of Fieldston are approximately east of the Henry Hudson Parkway and west of Cayuga Avenue, from approximately West 244<sup>th</sup> Street to approximately West 253<sup>rd</sup> Street. Mostly developed since the 1920s on land that was formerly part of the Delafield Estate, Fieldston is an example of an early planned residential community, with property covenants or deed restrictions having shaped its development, including its diversity of housing styles and periods. Its tree-lined streets are owned in common by a homeowners association that is responsible for their maintenance.

Issues that have been raised regarding Fieldston and nearby areas include the need for greater protection of natural features and the need to recognize and protect its historic resources, including estate residences and its early suburban street patterns. Numerous landmark quality buildings within Fieldston are not currently designated as landmarks. The neighborhood is home to a number of prominent private educational institutions including Horace Mann, the Fieldston School, the Riverdale Country School's upper campus, and Manhattan College. These campuses contain historic structures as well as areas for expansion. As with other areas in the district and city, current zoning permits community facility development and expansion considerably in excess of the size of residential development or expansion in the same zoning district, raising concerns over potential impacts on community character.

Zoning within Fieldston is predominantly R1-2, permitting single-family detached homes on lots of 5,700 square feet or more. Sections of Fieldston near Broadway are zoned R4, with areas closest to and facing Broadway zoned R6. Commercial overlays are present on Broadway south of West

251st Street. Much of Fieldston is designated as part of the Riverdale Special Natural Area District (NA-2), which extends over areas further to the west and is intended to protect natural features. These include required certification by the City Planning Commission for new development and limitations on modifications to topography, removal of trees, and alterations of the area's unique natural features. There are opportunities for expanding the NA-2 district into several areas on the fringes of Fieldston, where old growth trees, rock outcrops, and other unique natural features are present. Regulations addressing the special aspects of the area related to its community character are also needed.

A high percentage of lots within Fieldston range from approximately 7,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet in size, particularly between Grosvenor and Tibbett Avenues. There are few remaining sites for new development, with the exception of one large property located to the east of the Henry Hudson Parkway (Chapel Farm site). While the likelihood of existing homes in Fieldston being demolished to permit new construction is low, given the value and historic qualities of Fieldston's housing stock, the potential for the construction of out-of-character additions to area homes and expansion of community facilities present concerns related to the protection of natural features and community character. Most of the homes within Fieldston are exempt from the regulations of the NA-2 district within which a 40,000-square foot threshold triggers City Planning Commission review. This and the other factors listed above suggest a need to amend the controls over development within the NA-2 district to provide greater protections, to extend the SNAD-2 area, and to address discrepancies between required lot sizes for new development and actual lot sizes on certain blocks.

**7. Spuyten Duyvil/South Riverdale**

Spuyten Duyvil and South Riverdale comprise the southwesterly corner of Community District #8. The area's hilly topography and the shape of its shoreline have resulted in irregular street patterns in the southernmost areas where high-rise development predominates. The area contains a mix of low-, mid- and high-rise housing.

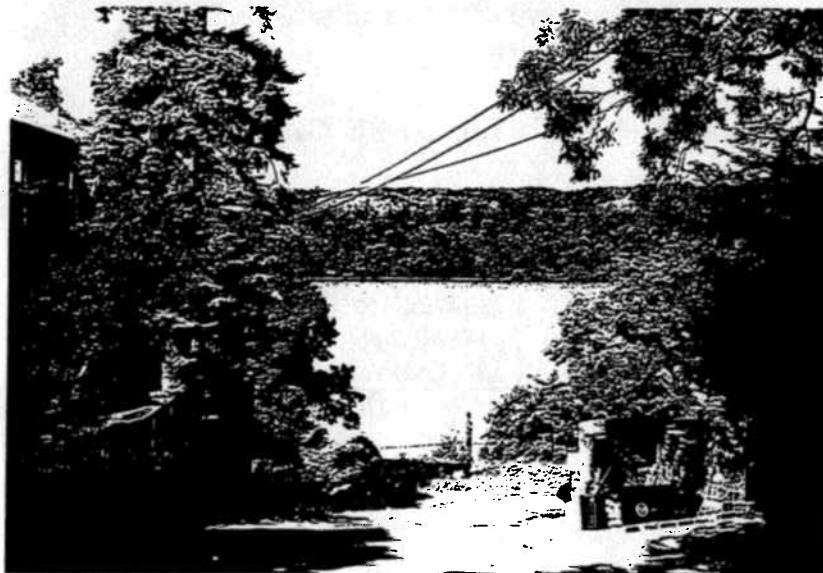
Residents have raised concerns over recent inappropriate development, and the potential for future inappropriate development, given the existing R6 zoning of the area that permits high-rise construction on large sites. These concerns relate to the loss of light and air, particularly where there is potential for blocking waterfront views. Pressures on area traffic flow and parking issues also need to be addressed.

Unique scenic waterfront views and views of the Palisades are experienced from several public parks in this area. These include Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park and Henry Hudson Park. An undeveloped triangular parcel of land located on the waterfront in Spuyten Duyvil opposite Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park that is owned by Metro-North Railroad has been recommended for acquisition for a future park by the Department of City Planning and local groups. There is currently no pedestrian access to this parcel, which allows magnificent views of the Harlem and Hudson Rivers.

Zoning within Spuyten Duyvil/South Riverdale ranges from R6-zoned blocks surrounding the Henry Hudson Parkway to lower density R1-2 areas abutting the waterfront, and R2 areas surrounding Arlington and Netherland Avenues. The NA-2 district covers waterfront portions of Spuyten Duyvil, including Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park, R1-2 zoned areas south of Edsall Avenue and Johnson Avenue, and the triangular piece of land opposite Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park.



*North Riverdale is distinguished by its consistent pattern of detached small houses.*



*Views of the Hudson River and the Palisades are present from numerous points along Palisade Avenue.*



**D. Public Facilities**

Community facilities serving CD8 range from regional facilities such as Kennedy High School, Van Cortlandt Park, and the Kingsbridge Library, to neighborhood and local facilities such as elementary schools, local branch libraries, and local playgrounds.

**1. Police, Fire and Emergency Services**

Police protection services in Community District #8 are provided by the 50<sup>th</sup> Precinct, located at 3450 Kingsbridge Avenue. Additional parking facilities adjacent to the Precinct are needed. Fire protection services are provided by Engine 52, Ladder 52, located at 4550 Riverdale Avenue, and by Engine 81, Ladder 46, located at 3025 Bailey Avenue. The Fire Department provides emergency medical services.

**2. Libraries**

Five libraries serve Community District #8, including a regional branch library. With the district's growing population of families with children, local libraries are in need of additional resources to meet increasing demands. Several are lacking adequate space to meet basic needs related to shelving, meeting and work areas, as well as demand for space to accommodate growing technology infrastructure.

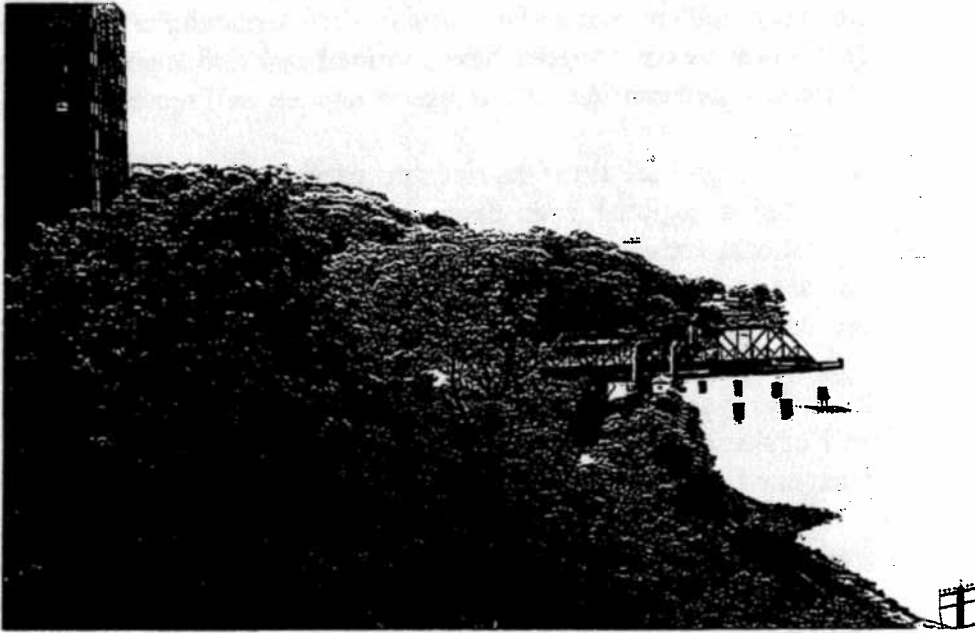
**Table III-4: Public Libraries in Community District #8**

Library Name	Address	Total Book Circulation
Jerome Park	118 Eames Place	47,960
Spuyten Duyvil	650 West 235 <sup>th</sup> Street	139,367
Kingsbridge Regional	280 West 231 <sup>st</sup> Street	164,351
Riverdale	5540 Mosholu Avenue	95,025
Van Cortlandt	3874 Sedgwick Avenue	58,342

Source: *Community District Needs The Bronx Fiscal Year 1994*, New York City Department of City Planning, p 240.

**3. Parks**

Parks and open space are important factors in shaping the quality of life in Community District #8. The district borders one of the largest parks within the New York City park system, though waterfront access is limited and



*The Hudson River (above) and the Harlem River (below) are valuable scenic resources that require special protections through Special Purpose District mapping actions.*



access to open space varies among different parts of the district -- the southern portions of the district being relatively farther removed from the large recreational open spaces. The district contains 239 acres of parkland, not including Van Cortlandt Park, giving it a ratio of 2.46 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. Factoring in Van Cortlandt Park, the Community District can be considered to have a ratio of parkland to population in excess of the standard considered to represent an area well served by open space.

Van Cortlandt Park is the district's primary recreational open space as well as being a regional open space resource. It contains a diversity of recreational activities and learning opportunities. The park includes golf courses, tennis courts, baseball fields, ski and hiking trails, bridle paths, a 36-acre lake, bird and wildlife sanctuaries, and cultural resources and historical sites ranging from Dutch and Revolutionary War sites, to sites related to the city's early development. The park does not contain a continuous bicycle path or skating rink, despite its size. The need for improved maintenance has been cited related to lawn areas, pathways, trees, and drinking fountains.

Parks also harbor evidence of the evolution of the city and local community. Van Cortlandt Park contains the 1748 stone Van Cortlandt Mansion (a designated New York City landmark), as well as numerous other non-landmark designated sites including burial grounds, gardens, and other sites associated with the Van Cortlandt family, which arrived in 1691, following the Philipse family, whose estate had previously encompassed the park. Van Cortlandt Park also contains the below and above-ground remains and right-of-way of the Old Croton Aqueduct, an important part of the history of the growth of New York City and the region. The Putnam Line railroad right-of-way, which ran north through Westchester County and the Harlem Valley, is preserved within Van Cortlandt Park, and connects with portions to the north and south. The Bronx portion has potential for improvements similar to Westchester County's 30-mile portion, which has been reused as a multi-purpose recreational path, with historical markers along the way providing images and descriptions of the stations and the area's early development.

Other parks are also rich with historical and Native American sites, including Henry Hudson Memorial Park, Riverdale Park, Fort #4 Park, and open spaces surrounding the Jerome Park Reservoir. The transformation of the Jerome Park Reservoir from a thoroughbred racetrack, built in 1866, to a grand monument to the City's early infrastructure, is a later chapter in a history that includes the colonial era Kingsbridge Village, as well as Dutch and Native American sites.

The following table lists parklands and recreational facilities within Bronx Community District #8.

**Table III-5: Community District #8 Parks and Recreation**

Park Name	Address	Type	Size
Henry Hudson Parkway	Harlem River to City Line	Highway Strip	54.10
Brust Square	W. 242 <sup>nd</sup> St., Spuyten Duyvil, Fieldston	Park	1.79
Conrad Graur Field	W. 233 <sup>rd</sup> St., W. 234 <sup>th</sup> St., Bailey Avenue	Park	1.27
Ewen Park	Johnson, Riverdale Ave.'s, Henry Hudson Parkway	Park	7.84
Frank S. Hackett Park	W. 254 <sup>th</sup> St., Riverdale Ave.	Park	1
Fort Independence Park	Sedgwick Avenue, Stevenson Place, Jerome Park	Park	3.02
Harris Park Annex	West side of Goulden Ave.	Park	4.35
Henry Hudson Park	Palisade, Independence Ave., Kappock St.	Park	8.97
JHS 141 Recreation Area	W. 237 <sup>th</sup> St., Independence Ave.	Park	2.58
Marble Hill Houses Playground	Kingsbridge Ave., W. 228 <sup>th</sup> St.	Park	1.64
Old Fort #4 Park	Reservoir, Sedgwick, Strong Ave.'s	Park	4.63
Perkins Playground	W. 248 <sup>th</sup> - 252 <sup>nd</sup> St.'s, Independence Ave.	Park	20.86
PS 24 Playground	Douglas Ave., W. 235 <sup>th</sup> -236 <sup>th</sup> St.'s	Park	1.84
Riverdale Park	Hudson River, W. 232 <sup>nd</sup> -254 <sup>th</sup> St.'s, Palisade	Park	97.19
Ruth Maclaughlin Playground	W. 238 <sup>th</sup> -242 <sup>nd</sup> St.'s, Greystone Ave.	Park	.55
Seton Hospital site	W. 232 <sup>nd</sup> -235 <sup>th</sup> St., Independence Ave.	Park	11.68
Van Cortlandt Park	Broadway, Jerome Ave., City Line	Park	1,146.43
Vinmont Veteran Park Recreation Center	W. 254 <sup>th</sup> St., Riverdale, Mosholu Ave. Kingsbridge Terrace	Park Recreation Area	2.90 .32
Sitting Area	Broadway, Van Cortlandt Park South	Sitting Area	.35
Sitting Area	Kappock Street, Henry Hudson Parkway	Sitting Area	.5
Sitting Area	W. 230 <sup>th</sup> -231 <sup>st</sup> St., Henry Hudson Parkway	Sitting Area	.5
Center Plots	Palisade, Independence Ave.	Triangle	.18
David Sheridan Plaza	Mosholu Ave., Broadway	Triangle	.06
Park	Albany Crescent, W. 233 <sup>rd</sup> St, Deegan	Triangle	.43
Park (Center Plots)	Palisade Ave., Johnson Ave.	Triangle	6.60
Park Strip	W. 238 <sup>th</sup> St., Bailey Ave., Van Cortlandt Park S.	Triangle	.08
Park Strip	W. 234 <sup>th</sup> St., W. 238 <sup>th</sup> St., Bailey Ave.	Vestpocket Park	3.53
Park Strip	W. 230 <sup>th</sup> St., Bailey Ave., Albany Crescent	Vestpocket Park	.27

Source: *Community District Needs The Bronx Fiscal Year 1994*, New York City Department of City Planning, p 241.

**4. Schools**

The quality of area public schools and the confidence of area residents in them are critical not only in retaining families that might otherwise move away, but also in fostering a sense of community and connection among all members of the community, including seniors and families without children.

Bronx School District 10 serves the entire Community District #8 area as well as areas as far east as Belmont and as far south as Tremont Avenue. School District 10 is the largest of the city's school districts in terms of number of students although enrollments have been decreasing in recent years. Kennedy High School, the district's only public high school, is significantly overcrowded, with 4,305 students as of 2000. Residents have expressed concerns over the quality of educational offerings at Kennedy High School and many parents opt to send their children to private schools or to leave the area as their children reach high school age. Increasing secondary schooling options by combining high school and middle school levels at PS 141 has been discussed as a potential solution.

The following table lists area public schools and compares their building capacities (number of seats) with their actual 1997-1998 and 1999-2000 enrollments:<sup>1</sup>

**Table III-6: Community District #8 Public School Capacity, Enrollment and Utilization Trends 1997-2000**

Name	Address	1999-2000 Building Enrollment	1999-2000 Building Capacity	1997-1998 Building % Utilization	1999-2000 Building % Utilization
<b>Elementary Schools</b>					
PS 7	3201 Kingsbridge Avenue	884	714	126%	124%
PS 24	660 W. 236 <sup>th</sup> St.	855	885	107%	97%
PS 37	188 W. 230 <sup>th</sup> St.	532	628	97%	85%
PS 81	5550 Riverdale Ave.	622	579	125%	107%
PS/MS 95	3961 Hillman Ave.	1,567	1,376	123%	114%
PS 207	3030 Godwin Terrace	649	522	131%	124%
<b>Middle Schools</b>					
MS 141	660 W. 237 <sup>th</sup> St.	1,035	1,251	100%	83%
MS 143	120 W. 231 <sup>st</sup> St.	1,099	1,134	116%	97%
<b>High Schools</b>					
J.F. Kennedy	99 Terrace View Ave.	4,305	3,869	117%	110%

Source: New York City Board of Education, 1997-1998 *New York City Board of Education School Facilities: Capacity-Enrollment-Utilization*, June 1998, pp. 33-37

<sup>1</sup> New York City Board of Education, 1997-1998 *New York City Board of Education School Facilities: Capacity-Enrollment-Utilization*, June 1998, pp. 33-37.

## IV. Neighborhood Preservation Strategy

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### A. Recommended Zoning Mapping Actions

The recommendations of the *CD8 2000 River to Reservoir Plan* support a vision for the future of Bronx Community District #8 that includes enhanced quality of life and preservation of the scale and form of the district's neighborhoods. A set of zoning changes are proposed to ensure that the type of development permitted more closely matches underlying built form. Thirteen areas, described below and outlined on the Proposed Rezoning Areas map (page IV-3), are identified for rezoning actions. These areas include mid-rise contextual zones to preserve the historic pattern of development of areas of Kingsbridge and Riverdale, and lower density contextual zoning districts intended to preserve a particular housing configuration, such as rows of detached housing (see Table IV-1, Summary of Existing CD8 Residential Zoning Regulations and Potentially Applicable Contextual Zoning District Regulations, page IV-4).

#### 1. Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village

The narrow and winding streets around the interior blocks of Kingsbridge Heights and Van Cortlandt Village are currently zoned R6 and R7-1. Rezoning of several blocks to a lower density zone, or to a contextual equivalent zone, would address concerns regarding overly bulky development. It would also place greater controls on community facility expansions in interior blocks where the curvilinear configuration of streets, hilly topography, and historic neighborhood character closely tied to the Jerome Park Reservoir present limitations on the area's capacity to absorb additional traffic and additional impacts on light and air.

The Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village Sub-Areas include five separate rezoning areas, which are identified in Table IV-2 on pages IV-5 and IV-6 (Rezoning Area Compliance Rates). Areas recommended for further study for rezoning from R6 to a lower density zone, such as the R5, include two blocks and five block portions located north of West 231<sup>st</sup> Street and south of approximately Cannon Place and Giles Place, and west of the midblock between Sedgwick Avenue and Kingsbridge Terrace/Giles Place and east of approximately Heath Avenue and Fort Independence Street (Sub-Area 1). Ninety six percent, or 153 of the 159 residential lots within this area, comply with the R5 maximum F.A.R.<sup>1</sup> of 1.25 (contain development

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<sup>1</sup> Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.) represents a measure of building size, or bulk, based on a ratio of the total amount of floor area divided by the total lot area.

*Neighborhood Preservation Strategy*

with F.A.R.'s below 1.25) and are also below four stories in height. A contextual mid-rise zoning district, such as the R6A, is recommended for lots facing Sedgwick Avenue south of Giles Place and north of West 231<sup>st</sup> Street (Sub-Area 2), 94 percent of which are either four stories or less, and have F.A.R.'s below 2.0 (residential lots).

**Proposed Rezoning Actions**

- Sub-Area 1: R6 to R5
- Sub-Area 2: R6 to R6A
- Sub-Area 3: R6 to R4A
- Sub-Area 4: R7-1 to R4A
- Sub-Area 5: R7-1 to R4A
- Sub-Area 6: R4 to R4-1
- Sub-Area 7: R6 to R4-1
- Sub-Area 8: R1-2 to R1-1
- Sub-Area 9: R3-1 to R3A
- Sub-Area 10: R3-2 to R3-1
- Sub-Area 11: R7-1 to R7A
- Sub-Area 12: R1-2 to R1-1
- Sub-Area 13: R6 to R6A

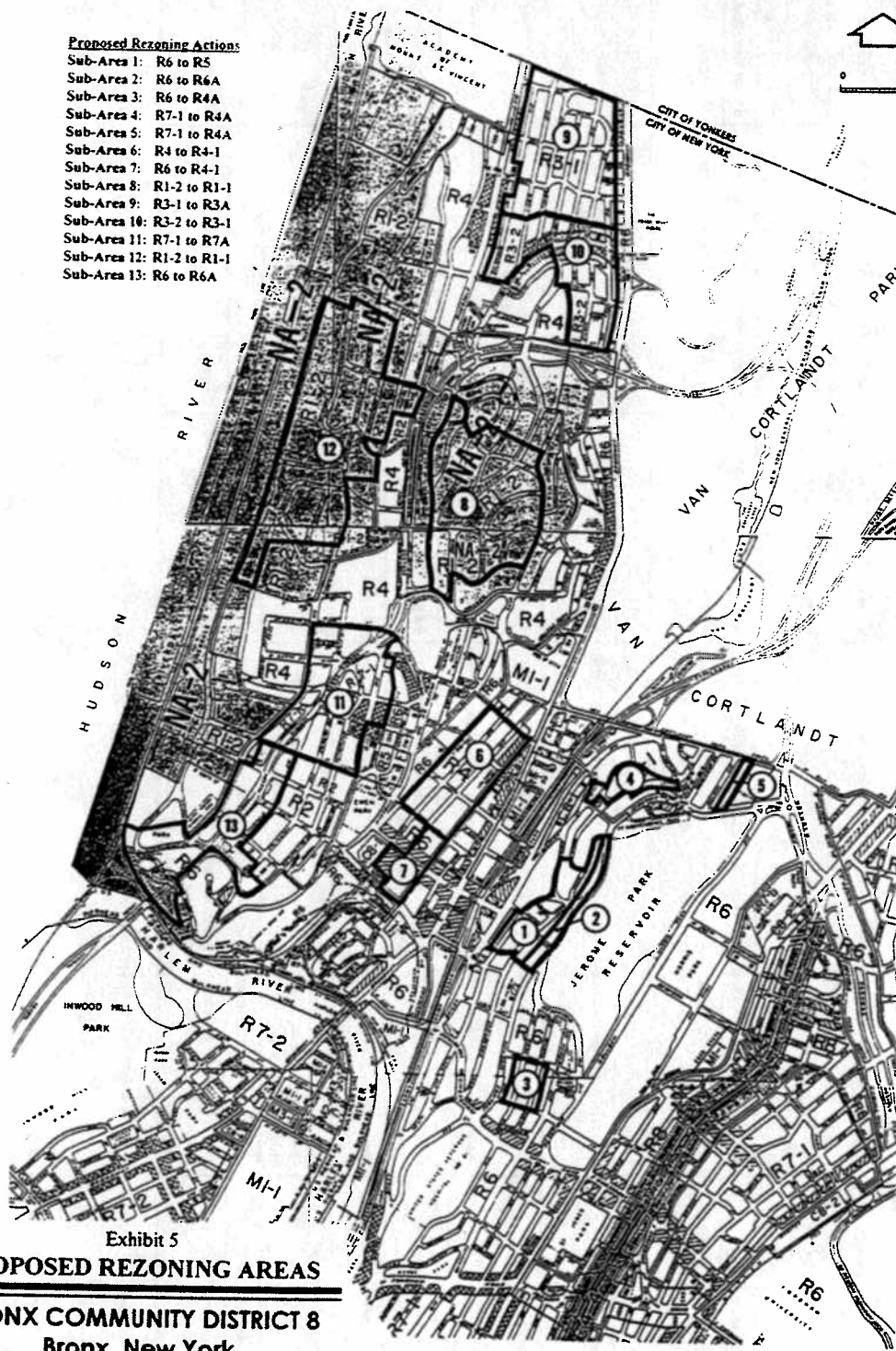


Exhibit 5  
**PROPOSED REZONING AREAS**

**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8**  
**Bronx, New York**

*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants*

BASE MAP SOURCE: New York City Planning Commission



Table IV-1  
Bronx Community District #8 197-a Plan:  
Summary of Existing CD8 Residential Zoning District Regulations  
and Potentially Applicable Contextual Zoning District Regulations

Zoning District	Description	Permitted Housing Types	Maximum FAR*	Maximum Building Height	Maximum Density
R1-1	Single-family detached residences	Single-family detached houses on lots at least 100 feet wide.	0.5	N/A	4 dwelling units per acre.
R1-2	Single-family detached residences	Single-family detached houses on lots at least 60 feet wide.	0.5	N/A	7 dwelling units per acre.
R2	Single-family detached residences	Single-family detached houses on lots at least 49 feet wide.	0.5	N/A	11 dwelling units per acre.
R3-1	Single- or two-family residences - detached or semi-detached	Permits single-family and two-family houses (detached and semi-detached)	0.5 plus 0.1 attic allowance	35 feet; perimeter wall height: 21 feet	42 dwelling units per acre
R3-2	General residence district	Permits all types of housing including multiple family units such as townhouses and rowhouses.	0.5 plus 0.1 attic allowance	35 feet; perimeter wall height: 21 feet	42 dwelling units per acre (detached or semi-detached); 30 dwelling units per acre (other).
R4	General residence district	Allows similar housing types as R3-2 districts, but at a higher density.	0.75 plus 0.15 attic allowance	35 feet; perimeter wall height: 25 feet	45 dwelling units per acre
R4-1	Single- or two-family residences - detached or semi-detached	R4-1 is similar to R3-1, allowing single- and two-family detached and semi-detached houses, but R4-1 generates larger houses on smaller lots because of its narrower lot requirements for detached residences and 0.75 FAR.	0.75 plus 0.15 attic allowance	35 feet; perimeter wall height: 25 feet	45 dwelling units per acre
R5	General residence district	Allows a variety of housing types similar to R3-2 and R4, but at a higher density.	1.25	40 feet; street wall height: 30 feet	72 dwelling units per acre
R6	General residence district	Permits all types of medium density housing, typically between three and 12 stories in height.	2.43	Maximum height is controlled by the intersection of front and rear sky exposure planes.	160-176 dwelling units per acre
R7-1	General residence district	Permits all types of medium density housing, typically up to 14 stories in height.	4.8	Maximum height is controlled by the intersection of front and rear sky exposure planes.	208-226 dwelling units per acre
<b>Contextual Districts with Potential Application in Bronx Community District #8</b>					
R3A	Single- or two-family detached residences only	Permits modest single- and two-family detached houses on lots that are substantially narrower than R3-1 districts. Allows zero lot line buildings.	0.5 plus 0.1 attic allowance	35 feet; perimeter wall height: 21 feet	37 dwelling units per acre
R4A	Single- or two-family detached residences only	Permits single- and two-family detached houses at a higher bulk than the R3A, with no zero lot line buildings permitted.	0.75 plus 0.15 attic allowance	35 feet; perimeter wall height: 21 feet	30 dwelling units per acre
R6A	General residence district	Permits greater lot coverage and lower building height than the R6 district. Typical development permitted in the R6A district includes six-story apartment buildings designed to be compatible with existing mid-rise apartment buildings.	3.0	70 feet	192 dwelling units per acre
R6B	General residence district	Permits low-rise buildings with greater lot coverage such as four-story rowhouses.	2.0	50 feet	129 dwelling units per acre
R7A	General residence district	Permits greater lot coverage and lower building height than R7 districts. These districts typically produce six-to-eight-story apartment buildings designed to be compatible with existing mid-rise apartment buildings.	4.0	80 feet	258 dwelling units per acre

\*Measure of building bulk based on ratio of the total amount of Floor Area divided by Total Lot Area.

**Table IV-2  
Rezoning Area Compliance Rates**

**Sub-Area 1**

**Kingsbridge Heights Heath Ave./Kingsbridge Terrace/Giles Place: R6 to R5**

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<= 4 S	%<= 4 S	< 1.25 FAR	% <1.25 FAR
3253*	16	1	16	100.00%	16	100.00%
3254*	15	1	14	93.33%	14	93.33%
3255*	30	0	30	100.00%	30	100.00%
3257	52	7	50	96.15%	50	96.15%
3258*	29	1	27	93.10%	27	93.10%
3261*	17	1	16	94.12%	16	94.12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>96.23%</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>96.23%</b>

\*Block Portion

**Sub-Area 2**

**Sedgwick Avenue, 231st Street - Giles Place: R6 to R6A**

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<4 S	%<4 S	<2.0 FAR	% <2.0 FAR
3253*	19	2	18	94.74%	18	94.74%
3254*	22	0	21	95.45%	21	95.45%
3255*	22	0	20	90.91%	20	90.91%
<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>93.65%</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>93.65%</b>

\*Block Portion

**Sub-Area 3**

**Kingsbridge Heights Claflin/Webb Avenue: R6 to R4A**

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<= 2.5 S	%<= 2.5 S	< .9 FAR	<0.90 FAR	Detached	% Det.
3249 East*	16	1	11	68.75%	9	56.25%	10	62.50%
3249 Mid.	27	0	22	81.48%	16	59.26%	24	88.89%
3249*	15	0	11	73.33%	10	66.67%	15	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>75.86%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>60.34%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>84.48%</b>

\*Block Portion

**Sub-Area 4**

**Van Cortlandt Village Canon Place/Orloff Ave.: R7-1 to R4A**

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<2.5 S	%<2.5 S	Detached	% Detached	<0.90 FAR	<0.90 FAR
3263 North <sup>1</sup>	23	4	19	82.61%	20	86.96%	19	70%
3263 East*	15	1	15	100.00%	15	100.00%	14	93%
3263 West*	14	0	14	100.00%	14	100.00%	12	86%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>92.31%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>94.23%</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>87%</b>

\*Block Portion

**Sub-Area 5**

**Van Cortlandt Village Saxon Avenue: R7-1 to R4A**

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<2.5 S	Detached	% < 0.90 FAR	% <1.0 FAR and Det.
3252*	16	0	16	100.00%	56%	93.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>93.00%</b>

\*Block Portion

Sub-Area 6

Kingsbridge Ave. - Irwin Ave./232nd - 235th Streets: R4 to R4-1

Block #	# Res Lots	Vacant	<= 2.5 S	%<= 2.5 S	Det./Semi-Det	% Det./Semi-D.
5756	20	2	14	70.00%	20	100.00%
5757	45	0	45	100.00%	33	73.33%
5758	40	0	39	97.50%	14	35.00%
5761	31	1	30	96.77%	17	54.84%
5762	47	0	44	93.62%	44	93.62%
5763	52	0	47	90.38%	47	90.38%
5766	28	1	22	78.57%	16	57.14%
5767	32	1	28	87.50%	22	68.75%
5768	44	0	36	81.82%	37	84.09%
<b>Total</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>89.97%</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>73.75%</b>

Sub-Area 7

Corlear/230th - 232nd Streets: R6 to R4-1

Block #	# Res Lots	Vacant	<= 2.5 S	%<= 2.5 S	Det./Semi-Det	% Det./Semi-D.	% all lots < 0.90 FAR
5708	10	0	10	100.00%	7	70.00%	91%
5709*	6	0	6	100.00%	6	100.00%	77%
5711*	8	0	8	100.00%	8	100.00%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>87.50%</b>	<b>90%</b>

\*Block Portion

Sub-Area 8

Fieldston: R1-2 to R1-1

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	>10,000 SF	%>10,000 SF
5809	13	1	9	69.23%
5810	9	2	5	55.56%
5811	12	0	12	100.00%
5812	22	0	17	77.27%
5818	14	3	12	85.71%
5819	17	3	15	88.24%
5820	6	2	2	33.33%
5821	23	4	14	60.87%
5822	20	5	13	65.00%
5823	13	1	7	53.85%
5829	4	1	4	100.00%
5830	3	1	3	100.00%
5832	4	1	4	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>73.13%</b>

\*Block Portion

Neighborhood Preservation Strategy

Sub-Area 9

North Riverdale 259th - 263rd Streets: R3-1 to R3A

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<= 2.5 S	%<= 2.5 S	Detached	% Detached
5864	11	0	10	90.91%	4	36.36%
5865	19	1	18	94.74%	11	57.89%
5866	19	1	19	100.00%	19	100.00%
5867	22	2	22	100.00%	22	100.00%
5868	16	3	15	93.75%	16	100.00%
5869	20	2	20	100.00%	20	100.00%
5870	28	3	26	92.86%	22	78.57%
5871*	6	0	3	50.00%	3	50.00%
5872*	14	1	11	78.57%	12	85.71%
5873*	9	4	8	88.89%	9	100.00%
5874*	2	0	2	100.00%	2	100.00%
5875	25	6	16	64.00%	22	88.00%
5876	26	5	23	88.46%	2	7.69%
5877	23	1	23	100.00%	23	100.00%
5878	30	1	29	96.67%	30	100.00%
5879	27	4	27	100.00%	27	100.00%
5880*	11	0	10	90.91%	9	81.82%
5881	2	1	2	100.00%	2	100.00%
5882	18	3	10	55.56%	14	77.78%
5883	26	0	23	88.46%	23	88.46%
5884	27	2	22	81.48%	25	92.59%
5885	43	1	43	100.00%	37	86.05%
5886	47	0	45	95.74%	38	80.85%
5887	18	0	17	94.44%	16	88.89%
5888*	6	0	6	100.00%	6	100.00%
5889	27	3	24	88.89%	23	85.19%
5890	7	8	7	100.00%	7	100.00%
5891	13	0	5	38.46%	9	69.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>89.64%</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>84.56%</b>

\*Block Portion

Sub-Area 10

North Riverdale 254th - 259th Streets: R3-2 to R3-1

Block #	# Res Lots	Vacant	<= 2.5 S	%<= 2.5 S	Det./Semi-Det	% Det./Semi-Det.
5841*	13	3	13	100.00%	13	100.00%
5842	9	4	7	77.78%	9	100.00%
5843	13	1	13	100.00%	13	100.00%
5844	49	3	21	42.86%	43	87.76%
5851*	11	3	11	100.00%	11	100.00%
5852	27	2	22	81.48%	27	100.00%
5853	11	12	7	63.64%	11	100.00%
5854	17	9	0	0.00%	10	58.82%
5855	37	0	29	78.38%	36	97.30%
5856	12	0	3	25.00%	7	58.33%
5857	13	1	12	92.31%	12	92.31%
5858	11	2	10	90.91%	10	90.91%
5859	12	2	9	75.00%	11	91.67%
5860	15	2	9	60.00%	9	60.00%
5861	35	0	21	60.00%	26	74.29%
5862	41	0	39	95.12%	41	100.00%
5863*	13	2	10	76.92%	13	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>68.05%</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>88.18%</b>

\*Block Portion

Sub-Area 11

Riverdale Mid-Rise, 232nd - 238th Streets: R7-1 to R7A

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<= 7 S	%<= 7 S	<= 3.0 FAR	%<= 3.0 FAR	<= 4.0 FAR	%<= 4.0 FAR
5787	12	0	12	100.00%	8	66.67%	10	83.33%
5788	6	0	6	100.00%	4	66.67%	5	83.33%
5789	7	1	7	100.00%	5	71.43%	6	85.71%
5790	1	1	1	100.00%	1	100.00%	1	100.00%
5794	3	0	3	100.00%	3	100.00%	3	100.00%
5795	2	0	2	100.00%	0	0.00%	1	50.00%
5796	1	0	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1	100.00%
5797	1	0	1	100.00%	1	100.00%	1	100.00%
5796	1	0	1	100.00%	0	0.00%	1	100.00%
5798	8	1	8	100.00%	6	75.00%	8	100.00%
5799	9	0	9	100.00%	6	66.67%	8	88.89%
5800	1	0	1	100.00%	1	100.00%	1	100.00%
5901	1	0	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
5902	1	0	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1	100.00%
5903	1	0	0	0.00%	1	100.00%	1	100.00%
5904	10	0	8	80.00%	6	60.00%	9	90.00%
5906	8	0	8	100.00%	8	100.00%	8	100.00%
5907	3	0	3	100.00%	0	0.00%	3	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>93.42%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>71.83%</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>89.47%</b>

\*Block Portion

Sub-Area 12

Riverdale 240th - 254th Street: R1-2 to R1-1\*

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	>10,000 SF	%>10,000 SF
5914	8	1	6	75.00%
5922	2	1	2	100.00%
5923	12	2	8	66.67%
5924	14	2	13	92.86%
5925	13	3	9	69.23%
5926	15	5	13	86.67%
5937	18	13	12	66.67%
5939	15	0	12	80.00%
5940	11	0	10	90.91%
5942	13	1	12	92.31%
5944	7	2	7	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>88.14%</b>

\*All Block Portions

Sub-Area 13

Spuyten Duyvil/Henry Hudson Parkway Corridor: R6 to R6A

Block #	# Lots	Vacant	<= 7 S	%<= 7 S
5724	1	0	1	100.00%
5725	9	0	9	100.00%
5732	2	0	1	50.00%
5737	2	1	2	100.00%
5742	8	0	7	87.50%
5743	3	0	3	100.00%
5745	4	1	4	100.00%
5746	2	0	1	50.00%
5747	6	0	6	100.00%
5748	22	0	22	100.00%
5749	2	1	2	100.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>95.08%</b>

\*Block Portion

A study of block frontages surrounding Cannon Place, Orloff Avenue and Saxon Avenue maintain a consistent pattern of detached housing (homes with two side yards) and are recommended for a lower density contextual zoning district that limits future residential development to this housing configuration, such as the R4A district (Sub-Areas 3, 4, and 5). Eighty-four percent of the residential lots in Sub Area 3, located between West 195<sup>th</sup> Street and West 197<sup>th</sup> Street, have a detached configuration, with 79 percent of the Orloff/Cannon Place Sub-Area 4 containing detached housing, and 100 percent of the Saxon Avenue Sub-Area 5 homes having a detached configuration.

In 1992, the New York City Department of City Planning conducted a study of parts of the Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village area under its Lower Density Contextual Zoning Program (Reservoir West Rezoning Study). Although interior blocks around Heath Avenue, Kingsbridge Terrace, Giles Place, and Fort Independence Street were seen as having potential for downzoning to R5, no consensus was reached with the Community Board over an associated recommendation to rezone a short stretch of nearby Bailey Avenue south of Albany Crescent and north of West 230<sup>th</sup> Street from R6 to R7A. After further zoning compliance analysis, and as a result of concerns and recommendations voiced at public hearings, the current 197-a Plan proposal for the Kingsbridge Heights/Van Cortlandt Village Sub-Area does not include the previous Bailey Avenue rezoning proposal. It also differs in that it adds a proposal to rezone a portion of Sedgwick Avenue to a contextual equivalent zone to maintain the scale and balance of housing types around the Jerome Park Reservoir.

## **2. Kingsbridge**

The area of Kingsbridge between Kingsbridge Avenue and Irwin Avenue contains a consistent pattern of low scale residential development, in some cases of a particular configuration such as detached or semi-detached homes, or attached row houses. The R4 zoning of this area does not recognize its distinct pattern of established housing, and portions of blocks south of West 231<sup>st</sup> Street between Kingsbridge Avenue and Tibbett Avenue are zoned R6 for medium density development, although the existing scale is predominantly lower density.

Given the already low density zoning of the R4 area, a contextual rezoning is recommended to protect the area's distinct pattern of housing configurations. This includes an R4-1 rezoning from R4 (Sub-Area 6),

limiting development to detached or semi-detached housing types. Consistent rows of these types of housing can be found in this area. These rezoning actions would preserve the unique early 20<sup>th</sup> century housing stock of this area and its distinct neighborhood character enhanced by old growth trees and landscaped front yards. Current zoning would permit bulkier development, and it does not discourage the paving of front yard areas for parking. Contextual zoning limits parking area location to a "side lot ribbon," encouraging planted front yards. Seventy four percent of the 339 residential lots within this Sub-Area contain detached or semi-detached housing, and 90 percent contain 2.5 stories or less. In addition, R6 zoned blocks to the south, located between Tibbett and Kingsbridge Avenues, and between West 230th and West 232nd Streets, are recommended for downzoning to R4-1 to protect the predominant low scale of housing present (Sub-Area 7). All of the residential lots within this area contain buildings of 2.5 or fewer stories, and 74 percent are detached or semi-detached.

### **3. Fieldston**

The large-lot pattern of development within Fieldston located between approximately Delafield Avenue/Henry Hudson Parkway on the west, Tibbett Avenue and West 252<sup>nd</sup> Street on the east, Manhattan College Parkway on the south, and approximately Grosvenor Avenue and West 252<sup>nd</sup> Street on the north is recommended for rezoning to a lower density zoning district with a lot size requirement that recognizes the existing density and layout of lots in this area (Sub-Area 8). Seventy three percent of the 160 residential lots within this area have areas greater than 10,000 square feet, matching the requirement for the R1-1 district. This area is also subject to the regulations for the Riverdale Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2), for which changes are discussed below.

For the review of Special Natural Area District applications, the Department of City Planning and City Planning Commission should consider the entire Fieldston neighborhood as a cohesive whole, recognizing that potential negative effects from any future expansions or development actions in one portion of Fieldston, including in areas that fall outside of the proposed R1-1 rezoning area, can potentially have detrimental effects on the character of the area as a whole.



**4. North Riverdale**

**a. North Riverdale Sub-Area 1: 259<sup>th</sup> Street – City Line**

Interior blocks in North Riverdale north of West 259<sup>th</sup> Street, between approximately Delafield Avenue and Post Road/Huxley Avenue are characterized by rows of detached single-family housing. This distinct double-side yard configuration is integral to the neighborhood character of North Riverdale, though existing R3-1 zoning would permit semi-detached housing. The mapping of a lower density contextual zoning district limiting future development to detached housing, such as the R3A District, is recommended (Sub-Area 9). Ninety percent of the residential lots within this area contain buildings with 2.5 or fewer stories and 85 percent are of a detached configuration.

**b. North Riverdale Sub-Area 2: North and South of Mosholu Avenue**

R4 and R3-2 zoned blocks to the south of 259<sup>th</sup> Street and north of 254<sup>th</sup> Street between approximately Post Road and Valles/Delafield Avenue, contain predominantly low-rise residential uses (Sub-Area 10). Current zoning permits the development of high-rise housing through a waiver of height regulations available under R3-2 regulations. Given the existing pattern of development on these blocks (68 percent of residential lots contain buildings with of 2.5 or fewer stories and 88 percent are detached houses), a rezoning to an equivalent lower density district that does not allow the waiver of height limits, such as the R3-1, is proposed.

**5. Riverdale**

**Mid-Rise Contextual Rezoning Study Area**

The portions of Riverdale around, and to the east of, the Henry Hudson Parkway, contains a mix of mid-rise apartment buildings and two-to-three-story attached and detached homes. Abutting this area to the south are areas zoned R2. To prevent future tower-type development in this area, and provide a transition to abutting low density residential areas, the mapping of a mid-rise contextual district is recommended. Provisions of the R6A zone would more closely match the underlying built form of blocks between the

Henry Hudson Parkway, and Oxford/Johnson Avenue, south of West 239th Street, and north of 232<sup>nd</sup> Street (Sub-Area 11). Ninety three percent of the residential lots within this area contain low or mid-rise development below seven stories, and 72 percent have FARs below 3.0.

Some R1-2-zoned sections of Riverdale west of the Henry Hudson Parkway are characterized by large-lot development (over 10,000 square feet), similar to parts of Fieldston described above. Current regulations of the R1-2 zone do not match the existing pattern of residential densities in these areas, due to the R1-2's smaller permitted lot sizes, compared to those of existing homes. A rezoning to R1-1 is recommended for blocks within Sub-Area 12, located south of 254<sup>th</sup> Street, north of 240th Street, and west of approximately Arlington and Blackstone Avenues. Eighty eight percent of the 118 residential lots within this area have areas greater than 10,000 square feet, matching the requirement for the R1-1 district.

Other zoning recommendations for the Riverdale area discussed later in this Plan relate to Special Scenic View Districts, the Special Natural Area District, and historic preservation.

## **6. Spuyten Duyvil**

The R6 zoned areas surrounding the Henry Hudson Parkway south of 232<sup>nd</sup> Street and north of Edsall Avenue, and extending as far east as Netherland Avenue and as far west as Palisade Avenue, contain a mix of low-rise and mid-rise residential uses ranging from large-lot homes, to three-story townhouses, and seven-story apartments (Sub-Area 13). A medium density contextual zoning district, such as the R6A, is recommended for this area to limit future development to mid-rise, high coverage development. Such a rezoning would also prevent further tower construction in this area. Fifty eight lots, or 95 percent of the 61 residential lots on these five blocks and five block portions, contain buildings that are seven stories or less.

## **B. Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2) Recommendations**

### **1. Text Changes**

As a result of the efforts and foresight of community leaders in the 1970s, the westerly portions of Riverdale and Spuyten Duyvil are protected by special zoning provisions that preserve environmental features. The 197-a Plan proposes to tighten these controls and seeks to extend the area that the

Riverdale Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2) covers.

The criteria used to judge the appropriateness of development in the SNAD-2 currently relate to specific environmental features such as topographic or botanic features. These regulations need to be strengthened, similar to the recent amendments to the Special Hillside Preservation District, which increased limitations on development on steep slopes above 25 percent and provided greater tree protection and anti-erosion measures.

The neighborhood character of the SNAD-2 area is also defined by its unique street patterns, the scale of its architecture, and its historic features. These considerations should be included in the criteria for approval of future development in the SNAD-2 area, and the language of Zoning Resolution Section 105-942 should be revised to require that any development or alterations be designed in a manner that limits visual impacts on elements of the community that provide a sense of place, such as stone walls, established roadway configurations, scenic vistas, and historic structures.

The size and form of recent residential expansions and new home construction within the SNAD-2 has also been a cause of concern for area residents. Lowering the maximum Floor Area Ratio to 0.4 FAR from its current limit of 0.5 FAR has been recommended by the Land Use Committee of Community Board #8 as one approach that warrants further consideration by the Department of City Planning.

The SNAD-2 area also contains large institutional properties that have considerable expansion potential. In addition to changes to citywide community facility zoning discussed below,<sup>2</sup> modification of development and expansion regulations related to community facility uses within the SNAD-2 area are proposed. The 197-a Plan proposes to maintain the current balance of residential and community facility uses to ensure that future community facility development does not overwhelm neighborhood character. Those community organizations that, as property owners, are currently entitled to receive a Community Facilities bonus permitting as-of-right additional construction benefits with respect to such property would file with the City Planning Commission a written and supported statement setting forth what those rights are as of a date to be fixed. The rights thus specified would, to the extent correctly stated, be deemed vested. Thereafter, upon a

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<sup>2</sup> Proposed citywide revisions to community facility zoning include bringing these regulations more in-line with those for residential development.

showing that the usage of such vested rights, or any indicated portion thereof, would not materially adversely affect the nature and character of the adjacent community (by such factors, for example, as excessive traffic, adequacy of parking, environmental pollution, and the like) or a finding that any negative factors found to exist could be ameliorated by mitigating action (such as the installation of traffic lights or other devices or the creation of additional parking spaces or the cleanup of specified pollutants), such Community Facilities bonus rights could be drawn upon to the maximum legally permitted as of the filing date. Appropriate zoning text is required in formulating this change to ensure that the requirements of such findings can be adequately measured, or quantified, in order to be enforceable. Any property owner not currently entitled to such Community Facilities bonus rights could still seek entitlement thereto by way of a Special Permit application, compliance with ULURP requirements and City Council review.

This proposal would preserve existing Community Facilities bonus rights, subject to there either being no adverse community impact by reason of the utilization thereof or, alternatively, a showing that such adverse impact could be mitigated. The distinction would be that those who currently have such rights would have such rights preserved, while those who are not currently property owners possessed of such rights would still be capable of securing them, but only upon compliance with Special Permit requirements, compliance with ULURP requirements, and City Council review.

This approach to future growth in the SNAD-2 area recognizes the area's significant number of institutional uses located off of winding and narrow roads and its lack of capacity to absorb substantial amounts of additional traffic that could potentially result from the buildout of institutional uses. The area's unique landscape and built form present development constraints for residential development as well. For this reason, prohibition of the use of air rights transfers for residential development in the SNAD-2 area is proposed.

Procedural changes related to the review of SNAD-2 Authorization applications are also recommended. These include extending the Community Board's comment period on SNAD-2 Authorization applications from 30 to 60 days. For City Planning Commission alterations of SNAD-2 applications, an additional referral and comment period for the Community Board is also proposed.

Finally, the size threshold that determines applicability of the SNAD-2 regulations, even within the SNAD-2 area, needs to be lowered or eliminated. Currently all lots greater than 40,000 square feet receive reviews for site alterations. Site alterations on lots under 40,000 square feet are also reviewed if the lot does not contain a residence predating SNAD regulations, was subdivided after the enactment of SNAD, or is governed by a SNAD restrictive declaration or notice of restriction. A lower threshold needs to be studied, or a broader requirement for reviews of any actions affecting old growth trees, or even those having greater than a six inch caliper, needs to be instituted.

## **2. Special Natural Area District Extensions**

Six areas are identified for zoning mapping actions extending the SNAD-2:

### **a. Vinmont Area**

The Vinmont Sub-Area, a roughly triangularly shaped area of approximately six irregularly shaped blocks south of West 255th Street, north of West 253rd Street, and between Riverdale Avenue and Fieldston Road, possesses the character of the nearby SNAD-2 area but is not covered by this overlay district. The westerly blocks in this area are characterized by natural wooded areas that include New York City parkland (Frank S. Hackett Park), landscaped areas adjacent to the Henry Hudson Parkway, and a portion of a playground. The northeastern-most block contains low scale residential uses, including 27 single-family and townhouse units bordering Vinmont Place, which is a private roadway. Aside from wooded areas, unique natural features include large rock outcroppings and old growth trees. Zoning is currently R4 above West 254th Street and R1-2 below West 254th Street. The area abuts existing NA-2 designated areas to the south. This Plan supports the previous Community Board #8 proposal to designate Vinmont as part of the SNAD-2 area.

### **b. Tibbett Avenue Area**

The mapping of SNAD-2 areas to the east and south of Fieldston is also recommended. The Tibbett Avenue area includes portions of Manhattan College and a row of single-family homes to the south. The majority of the single-family homes would not necessarily be

afforded the protections found within the NA-2 regulations due to the size of their lots, which do not meet the threshold for review under NA-2 regulations.

**c. Manhattan College Parkway Area**

The Manhattan College area covers the Fieldston School's Upper Campus to the north of West 238<sup>th</sup> Street. This is an area with old growth trees and sloping terrain that is appropriate for inclusion in the SNAD-2 area.

**d. Ewen Park Area**

Two irregularly shaped blocks located between Irwin Avenue, Johnson Avenue and Cambridge Avenue south of West 234<sup>th</sup> Street (zoned R6 and R5) are recommended for inclusion in the SNAD-2 area. This area contains Ewen Park, low- and mid-rise residential uses, and a large, sloping wooded parcel south of West 234<sup>th</sup> Street.

**e. Edgehill Area**

The Edgehill area was previously recommended by Community Board #8 for rezoning to an R2 district from R6, with an extension of the NA-2 district over this one block area bounded by Edgehill Avenue, Johnson Avenue, West 230<sup>th</sup> Street, and a private extension of West 227<sup>th</sup> Street. This area contains a wooded hillside and lower density residential development.

**C. Special Hillside Preservation District**

Areas of Community District #8 contain some of the most varied terrain within the City, leading, in part, to the creation of the Riverdale Special Natural Area District. Other parts of the district contain significant amounts

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of steeply sloping land, though they are not covered by any regulations that protect steep slopes. The mapping of a Special Hillside Preservation District overlay is recommended for areas south of the existing SNAD-2 area, and within Kingsbridge Heights (see Special District Proposals Map, page 45).

The Special Hillside Preservation District overlay is intended to guide development to reduce hillside erosion, preserve hillside and protect neighborhood character. The regulations classify zoning lots according to the steepness of their sloping areas and impose special criteria, or performance standards, for as-of-right development. Requirements for development on land with under a 10 percent slope (Tier I sites) include the preparation of a vegetation survey and tree planting plan, with the planting of at least one tree required for every 1,000 square feet of lot area. Greater limitations on permitted lot coverage, height and setback, construction activity, and special standards for driveways, erosion control measures, and tree plantings are imposed for sites on slopes of between 10 and 35 percent. Any grading, clearing of vegetation, or development in a steep slope area (greater than 35 percent slope) requires City Planning Commission authorization in the Special Hillside Preservation District.

Special Hillside Preservation regulations should be strengthened to increase restrictions with the steepness of the average natural slope. Standards should also be provided to maintain the character of landforms, vegetation, and scenic qualities that contribute to a sense of place.

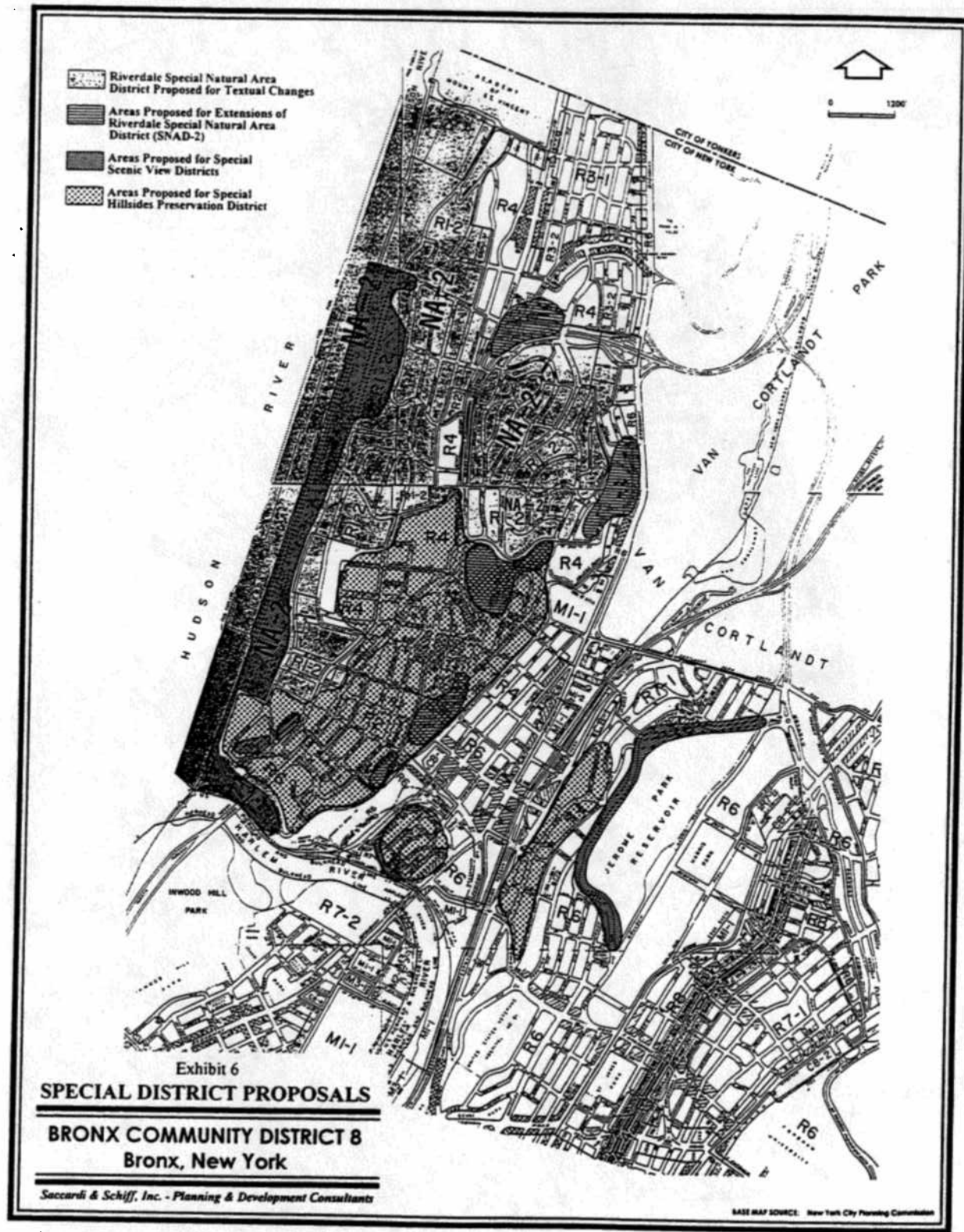
#### **D. Scenic Views**

Measures to protect scenic views from public places are proposed for locations that benefit from unique views of the Palisades, the Hudson River, the Harlem River, and the Jerome Park Reservoir. Special Scenic View District designation would protect outstanding public views in an area where there is considerable development potential and pressure. Further study is needed to identify specific view planes at various points in the community, above which no obstruction will be permitted unless authorized by the City Planning Commission.




As with existing Scenic View District regulations that are applied in Brooklyn, landscaping and signage improvements that could obstruct views from within public parks where the district is mapped would be prohibited unless authorized by the City Planning Commission. Modification of height, setback, and bulk regulations for certain types of development affecting the viewshed of the Special Scenic View District would require a Special Permit from the City Planning Commission. Specific locations for further study include: West 254<sup>th</sup> Street; Wave Hill, Riverdale

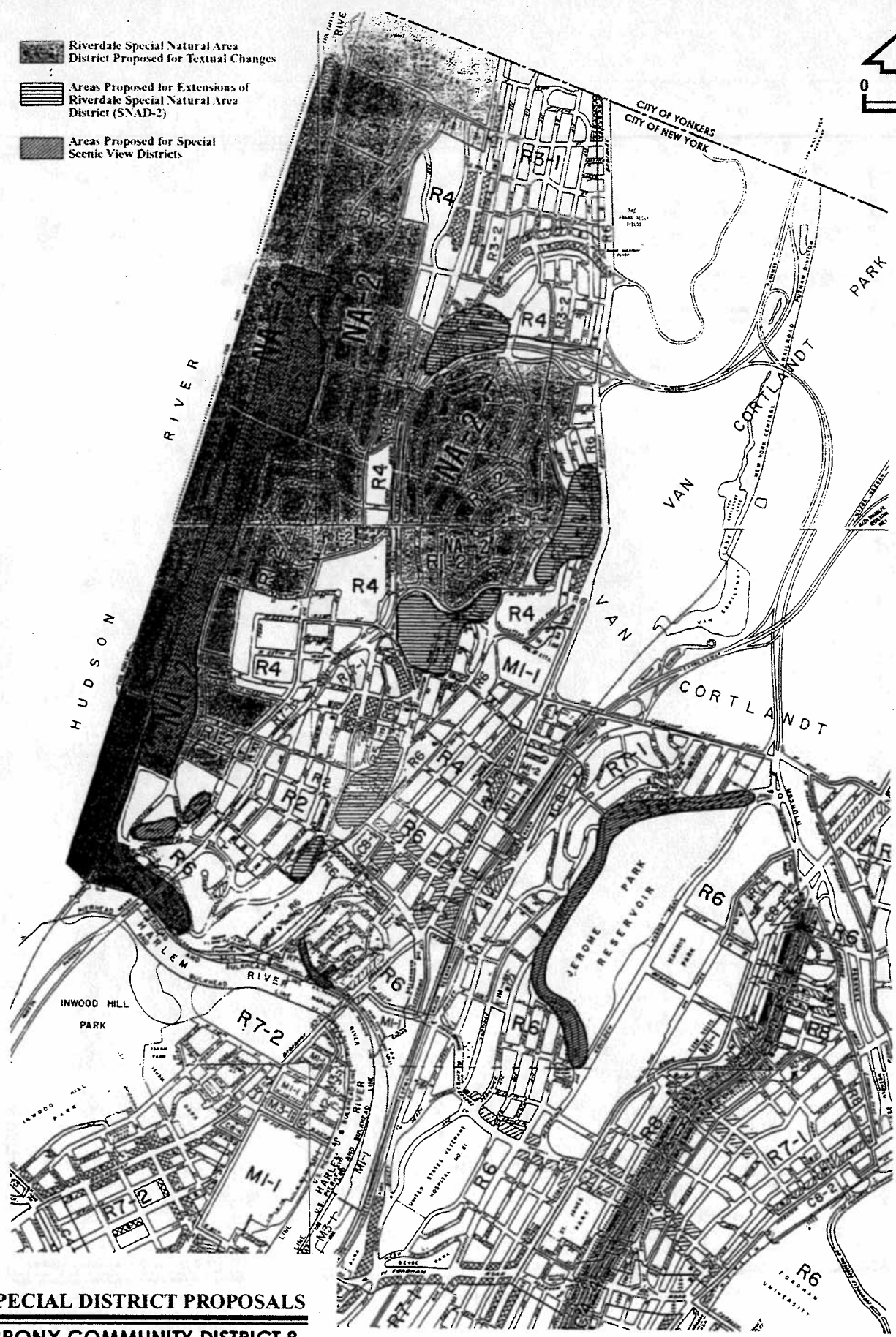
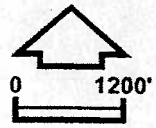
Park, and areas west of Palisade Avenue that overlook the Hudson; parklands with views of the Hudson River and the Palisades in Spuyten Duyvil and Marble Hill; and existing and future public parks surrounding the Jerome Park Reservoir (see Special District Proposals map, page IV-23).

In addition to the mapping of scenic view districts, the designation of the Jerome Park Reservoir and Van Cortlandt Lake as New York City Scenic Landmarks is recommended.



G:\M\810 Bronx Community Board #8 (Riverdale)\Graphics\Text January\IV. Neighborhood

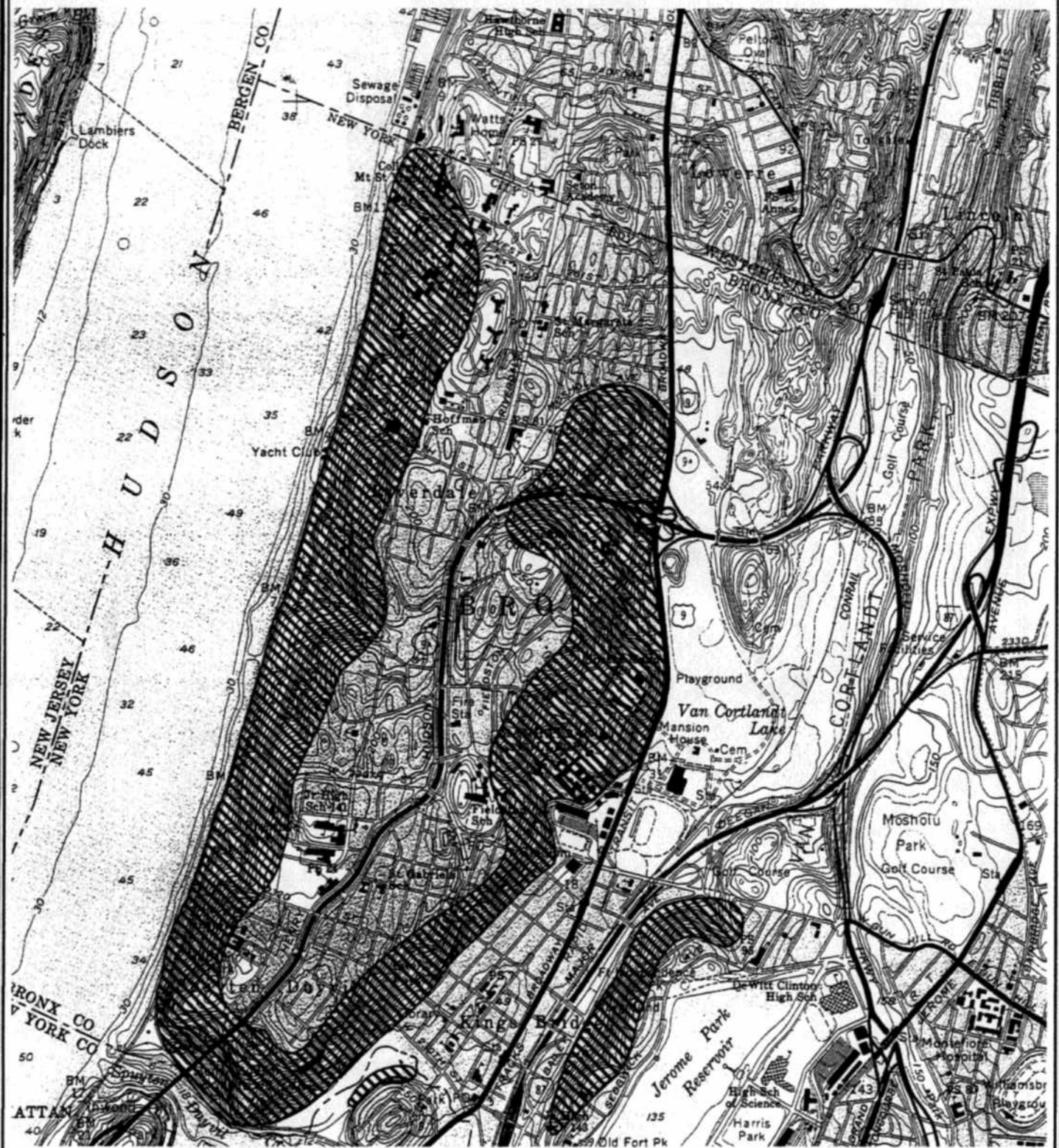
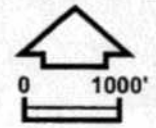
-  Riverdale Special Natural Area District Proposed for Textual Changes
-  Areas Proposed for Extensions of Riverdale Special Natural Area District (SNAD-2)
-  Areas Proposed for Special Scenic View Districts




**SPECIAL DISTRICT PROPOSALS**  
**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8**  
**Bronx, New York**

*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants*

BASE MAP SOURCE: New York City Planning Commission



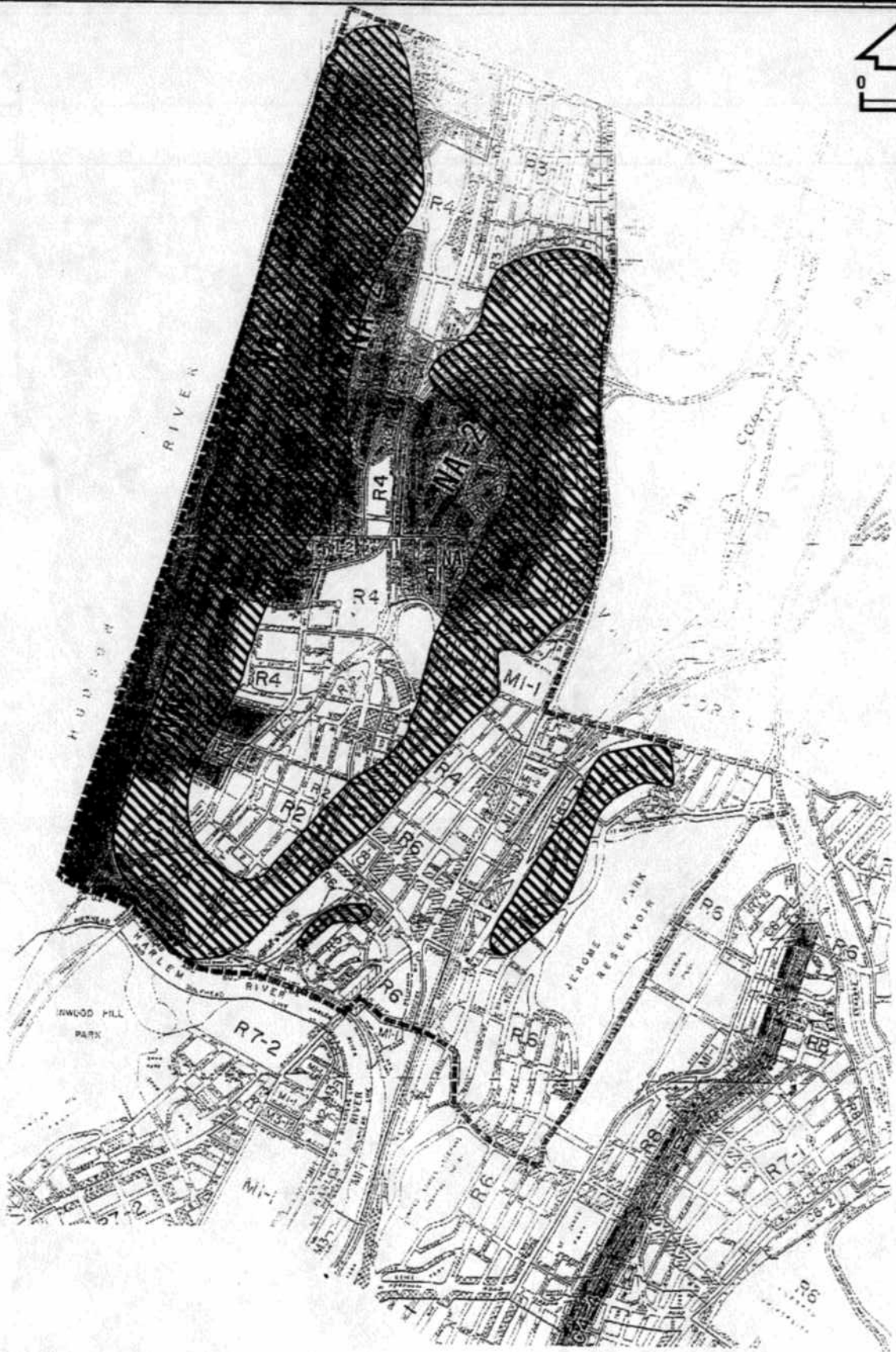
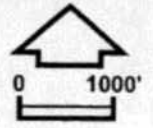
**AREAS PROPOSED FOR  
SPECIAL HILLSIDES  
PRESERVATION DISTRICT**

 **Areas Proposed for Special Hillside Preservation District**

**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8  
Bronx, New York**


*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants*

**BASE MAP SOURCE: USGS, Yonkers, New York Quadrangle**



**AREAS PROPOSED FOR  
SPECIAL HILLSIDES  
PRESERVATION DISTRICT**

**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8  
Bronx, New York**

 Areas Proposed for Special Hillside Preservation District

*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants*

BASE MAP SOURCE: New York City Planning Commission

## V. Historic Resources

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The portion of the northwest Bronx covered by Bronx Community District #8 is unique in possessing both the natural beauty of the Hudson Valley and the historical legacy and cultural diversity of New York City. Increased efforts are recommended to prevent the loss of local historical resources either through decay, displacement, or alteration of the surrounding context of historic resources. Opportunities for the designation of New York City landmarks and the listing of additional properties on the National and State Registers of Historic Places should be further investigated with the concurrence of property owners.

While owner responsibilities and limitations over alterations to New York City landmark properties have been raised as concerns regarding landmarking actions in the Community Board 8 197-a planning process, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission has strongly reiterated its position that its technical assistance and other programs make New York City landmark status a great benefit to affected property owners. Additional New York City landmark designations and National and State Register of Historic Places listings can serve as a stimulus towards a broader effort of further recognizing and protecting local historical and cultural assets to their fullest. The Community Board will work with local organizations and property owners to identify specific sites.

Other than historic landmark designations and listings of historic structures, New York City Scenic Landmark designation is recommended for the Jerome Park Reservoir, a scenic body of water that also has strong historic importance. Extension of the Riverdale Historic District is also recommended, following concurrence with area homeowners that could potentially be included in the Historic District. A comprehensive inventory of all of the district's historic resources is recommended to determine if other areas are appropriate for historic district or individual landmark designation.

Historic roads comprise an important part of the cultural landscape of Community District #8. An historic roads program is recommended for further study in order to identify significant historic rights-of-way, including roads that once served as Native American paths, routes of the early Dutch settlers, roads that played a role in the Revolutionary War, and early suburban-type street patterns laid out by Frederick Law Olmsted.





*Van Cortlandt Mansion (above) and Wave Hill (below) are designated New York City landmarks.*



## VI. Housing

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The availability of affordable housing and the condition of the existing housing stock are crucial to the district's future. Goals for housing include fostering a greater range of housing for all segments of the population through the renovation of the existing housing stock, including housing for younger families, the disabled, and seniors.

Increased housing renovation efforts are proposed in a targeted housing revitalization strategy. Greater focus by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development is needed in Community District #8 to ensure the stability of southern portions of the district that are in need of housing revitalization. These include areas within Marble Hill and Kingsbridge Heights. The reestablishment of a local Neighborhood Preservation Office is proposed, in addition to support for local groups. Continued funding is needed for special loan programs for the preservation and renovation of low and moderate income housing, and for additional personnel to assist tenants with housing problems. A small property owners advocacy unit should be created to focus on the southern portions of the district where housing conditions vary the most. In addition to the revitalization of existing housing, opportunities should be identified for the reuse of commercial and other non-residential structures for residential use. Where these potential housing resources exist in non-residentially zoned areas, zoning solutions permitting mixed use development should be pursued.

Improvements to the grounds and surrounding streets around the Marble Hill Houses are also recommended. Restoring the gardens and landscaping of this public housing complex should be complemented by increased sanitation and maintenance on adjacent streets such as Exterior Street, which currently suffers from poor visual conditions. Greening and improving the appearance of Exterior Street will also contribute to its establishment as a link in the network of recreational routes and bikeways proposed in the following chapter of this 197-a Plan.

## **VII. Parks and Recreation**

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In addition to providing recreation, parks and open space resources are critical elements contributing to the image of the community, and they contain important cultural and historical sites. Actions are recommended to enhance the availability and quality of parklands and recreational facilities. The first set of recommendations relates to improvement of existing facilities to meet the changing recreational needs of the area's population, focusing on the district's main parkland resource, Van Cortlandt Park. Other major points relate to increasing involvement of the community in park upkeep and improvements, and the creation of new parkland resources, including linear open spaces, and designation of the Jerome Park Reservoir and its surrounding land as parkland.

### **A. Van Cortlandt Park**

New facilities are needed within Van Cortlandt Park to increase access to a wider range of recreational opportunities for area residents. Improved maintenance is also needed, refurbishing playing fields, and environmental features such as Van Cortlandt Lake. Working with existing parks organizations, residents and local institutions will be critical to making the park a more vital part of residents' lives. Installing consistent signage, emphasizing the park's historical resources, and strengthening connections between disparate sections of the park will serve to make the park a more cohesive whole.

#### **1. Parade Grounds/Northern Field Sports Area**

Following recommendations of the Community Board #8 Parks Committee and the Parade Grounds Task Force, added facilities and better maintenance of the fields in the northern portion of the park are recommended to address the increase in utilization of these fields by a growing immigrant population. Deteriorated surfaces have resulted from heavy usage on the weekends. Another issue is a lack of adequate restroom facilities in the northern portion of the park, known as the Parade Grounds. The addition of a permanent comfort station near the soccer fields is recommended.

#### **2. Additional Park Facilities**

A consistent system of signage is needed for Van Cortlandt Park, including informational kiosks at park entrance points highlighting the history of the park and indicating the locations of facilities within the park. Signage on surrounding streets is needed to indicate parking locations, including at the stables and at the Van Cortlandt Golf Course.

There are additional opportunities for increasing the types of recreation available in Van Cortlandt Park. The Old Putnam Line railway right-of-way is an existing path that can be highlighted and linked to a network of east-west routes, such as the John Muir Trail. The now-abandoned Van Cortlandt station within the park provides an opportunity for renovation and reuse as a rest stop and visitors center for cyclists and hikers. Improved signage is also needed to indicate the route and the historic significance of the Putnam Line.

Also tying into improvements to the Putnam Line railway is a recommendation to create a bicycle route within Van Cortlandt Park. There is potential for the creation of both off-road and paved bicycle paths, taking advantage of the varied and challenging terrain of the park. Routes should be determined with local groups, limiting impacts to environmental features and the potential for conflict with other users of the park. Bicycle parking should be added at the periphery of the park to support any future bicycle paths.

Van Cortlandt Lake is a scenic component of Van Cortlandt Park that requires increased maintenance and improved access. Funding should be secured for a restoration program for Van Cortlandt Lake, include its dredging to prevent silting over, and the addition of boating facilities. Designation of Van Cortlandt Lake as a Scenic Landmark by the New York City Landmarks Commission is recommended.

### **3. Cultural and Historic Resources**

Van Cortlandt Park contains significant historic resources that are not fully protected or recognized. Many sites are hidden and would be better identified through improved historic markers. These include the Croton Aqueduct, the 13 stone pillars, the Manor Grove, sites related to the Van Cortlandt family such as Vault Hill, and Revolutionary War sites. Support for the planned Heritage Trail, which would link historic sites through a walking tour with appropriate signage, would accomplish this goal. Appropriate restoration efforts are needed, taking into account the varied historical periods with which several sites are associated.

To ensure the protection of these historic resources, an historic district should be considered, working with local groups. Designating this district will ensure that future park improvements take the varied historic sites within the park into account, and would provide technical assistance from the Landmarks Preservation Commission. To foster a stronger sense of

connection to local history, improved markers, such as an old-fashioned road sign at the Old Post Road indicating the date of its origin, should be installed by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

**B. Involving Area Schools in Parks**

The 197-a Plan supports increased voluntary and cooperative efforts within Van Cortlandt Park, such as the Parkland Partnership program's forest restoration work, involving area schools to a greater extent, and supplementing the Urban Parks Rangers program. Increased cooperative efforts linking the schools with parks enhancement and gardening activities should be pursued by local groups, schools, and the New York City Parks Department. Such partnerships can also be extended to other public areas within the district, such as the grounds of the Marble Hill Houses. The Parks Council's Success Gardens program serves as a model for how community gardens can be associated with schools for the benefit of both the community and the schools.

**C. Linear Parks and Greenways**

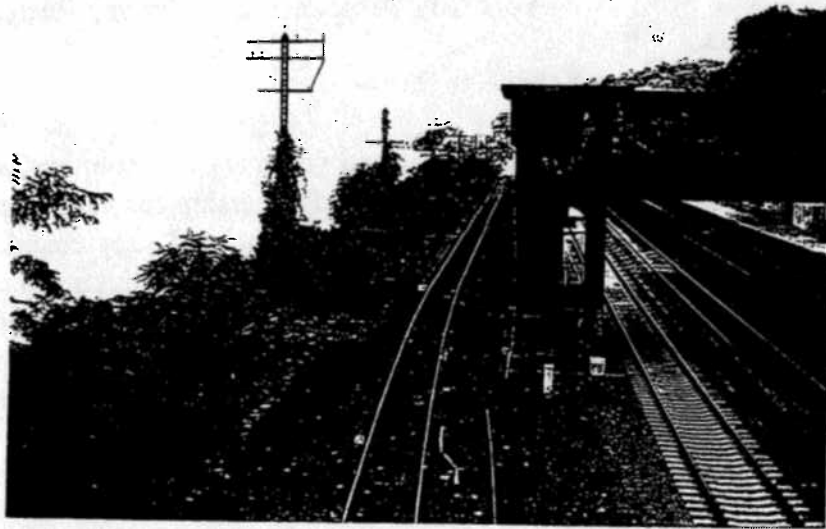
An enhanced system of linear open spaces is recommended for Community District #8 using both existing facilities and the designation of additional parkland resources. This interconnected network of on-street and off-street pathways will provide an additional recreational amenity as well as an alternative means of commuting. Components of the 197-a Plan's recommended network of existing and proposed greenways are as follows (see Proposed Recreational Trailways and Bikeways map, page VII-10):

**1. Old Putnam Line Right-of-Way**

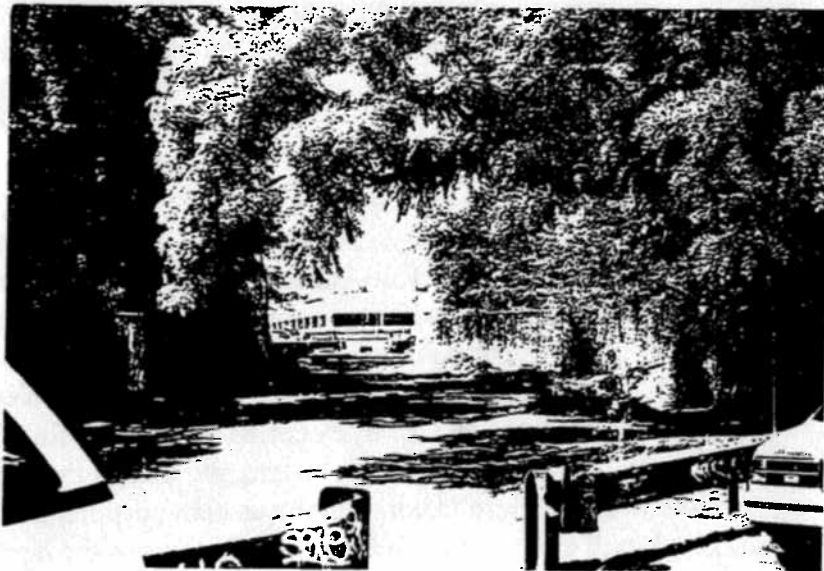
In the long term, a new multi-use linear open space is recommended using the Old Putnam Line right-of-way, parallel to the Major Deegan Expressway and connecting to planned and existing recreational rights-of-way to the north and south. The acquisition of this right-of-way by the New York City Parks Department, and its improvement as a trailway for hiking, cycling and rollerblading, will provide an alternative link to the Hudson River Valley Greenway for those residing in the eastern portions of Community District #8. It will also tie into already used portions to the north of Van Cortlandt Park. Once acquired, the right-of-way would need to be surfaced with asphalt. Typical costs of such improvements have recently been estimated at up to \$90,000 per mile.<sup>1</sup> Other elements of this project that will require

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<sup>1</sup> Hugh Morris, "Trails and Greenways: The Quintessential Sustainable Development Public Works Project," from *Progress: Surface Transportation Policy Project*, Vol. IX, No. 1, February 1999. *Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.*



*Opportunity for additional public access to the waterfront exists at the Riverdale Station.*



*Putnam Avenue presents opportunities for improvement as a pedestrian linkage.*

public and private assistance include buffering or screening improvements to limit traffic noise impacts, development guidelines for adjacent commercial uses recognizing the future recreational facility, and proper treatments and maintenance of adjacent properties to the west.

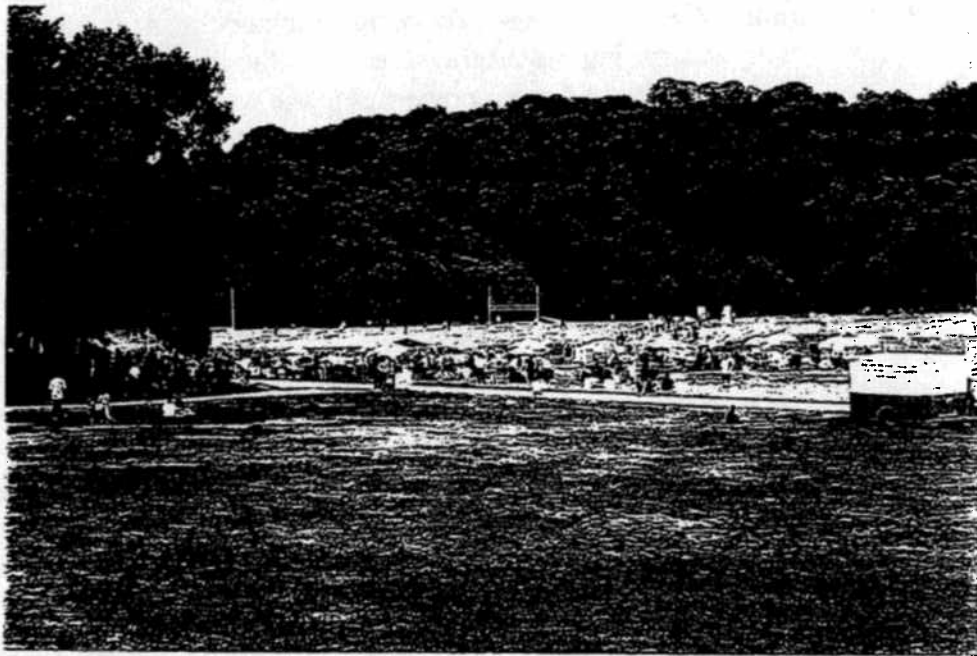
**2. Greenway Linkages and Crossings**

Greenway linkages connecting Van Cortlandt Park and other proposed and existing greenway routes are also proposed. From the north, this would entail pedestrian crossing improvements at Van Cortlandt Park South, where the right-of-way would cross into the park. There is currently no designated pedestrian crossing of Van Cortlandt Park South from Broadway to Bailey Avenue, a situation exacerbated by heavy east-west traffic, including cars accessing the Major Deegan Expressway. Broadway near the Parade Grounds is also in need of improved pedestrian crossings. Future study and the use of roadway markings, or variegated textured pavement, are recommended for strategic crosswalk locations in the community, such as future crossings of the Putnam Line railway. Other traffic calming measures that do not conflict with traffic circulation in surrounding areas should be implemented to ensure pedestrian safety and facilitate recreational trails.

At the southern end of the Putnam Line right-of-way, there is a need for connections to Broadway and the Hudson River Valley Greenway, the Broadway Bridge, and connections to waterfront trails being planned along the Harlem River. Signage and bicycle safety improvements to the Broadway Bridge would provide a key link for cyclists accessing Manhattan. Installation of a bicycle and pedestrian path on the Henry Hudson Bridge is a long term recommendation.

**3. Hudson River Valley Greenway**

Supporting recommendations of the State-appointed Bronx Advisory Committee to the Hudson River Valley Greenway, the 197-a Plan recommends that the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation designate a pedestrian route along Palisade Avenue from 232<sup>nd</sup> Street to 261<sup>st</sup> Street, extending north along Riverdale Avenue to the Yonkers border, and south to Manhattan via Independence Avenue, Kappock Street, and the Henry Hudson Bridge. The Greenway should be established by the Department of Parks and Recreation, with traffic control measures, signage, and other safety measures planned in consultation with area residents and the Bronx Advisory Committee to the Hudson River Valley Greenway.



*Soccer fields in the Parade Grounds are a heavily utilized component of Van Cortlandt Park.*



*The Old Putnam Line right-of-way is an historic resource that can be better highlighted and used to link open spaces in various parts of the district.*



**4. Other Bicycle Routes and Bicycle Facilities Improvements**

In addition to the above-described on- and off-street improvements, other streets within Community District #8 provide some of the best opportunities for on-street cycling within New York City. Bicycle safety improvements are recommended at key points in a network of streets appropriate for recreational cycling. These improvements would also provide improved east-west transportation access. The following map illustrates a conceptual linked network of streets for designation as bicycle safety zones. In addition to the Greenway route previously described, streets proposed for this route include Van Cortlandt Park South, Sedgwick Avenue, Johnson Avenue, Broadway, and a north-south running corridor connecting Irwin Avenue, Greystone Avenue, Waldo Avenue, Manhattan College Parkway, Tibbett Avenue, College Road, and Fieldston Road. Initial improvements should focus on roadway markings and signage improvements, particularly where heavy traffic presents safety concerns, such as along Van Cortlandt Park South. Bicycle parking facilities should be provided at major public destinations, such as at points along the Broadway commercial corridor, and at entrances to Van Cortlandt Park.

**D. Improved Waterfront Access**

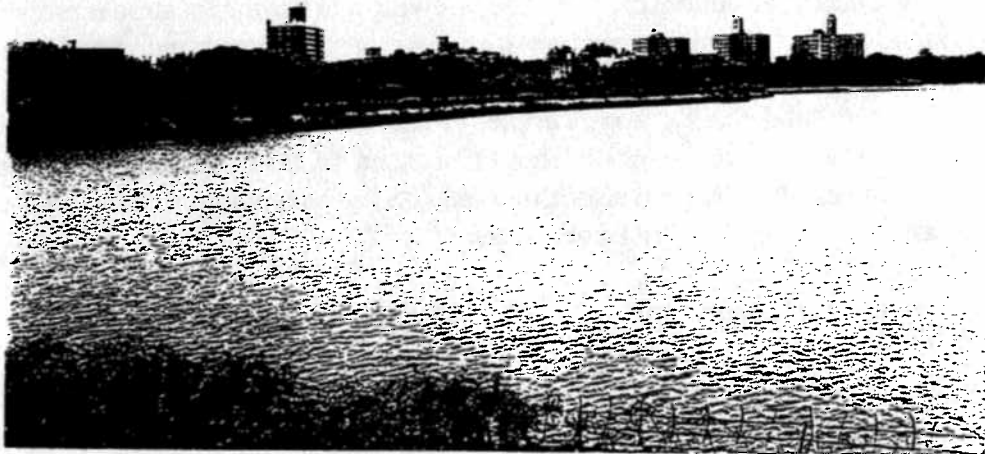
Improved access to the Hudson River waterfront is needed to take advantage of this tremendous underutilized resource. An access point should be created adjacent to the Riverdale train station in a manner compatible with, and ensuring the security of, surrounding residential uses. A water viewing and fishing location is proposed in the short term. Potential recreational improvements recommended for further study include the addition of a small boat launch, providing the opportunity for a kayaking outfitter/rental facility, for example, in tandem with the new passive recreational open space. A trial period should be used to test whether waterfront access improvements at the Riverdale train station are acceptable to local residents from safety and quality of life perspectives.

**E. Jerome Park Reservoir**

The 197-a Plan recommends implementation of the Jerome Park Conservancy and Community Board #8 proposal to designate the Jerome Park Reservoir as parkland. Completing the designation process and securing adequate funds for initial improvements will permit public access to its surrounding lands for recreational purposes. A 125-acre park should be created, including replacement of the fence at the water's edge with an attractive wrought iron fence, and removing the outer fence that impedes access to land surrounding the Reservoir. This would facilitate the creation of a running track around the Reservoir similar to that of the Central Park Reservoir, and the use of areas around the Reservoir for gardens and passive



*The portion of the Old Putnam Line right-of-way south of Van Cortlandt Park presents an opportunity for the creation of a new multi-purpose linear open space.*



*Designation of the lands surrounding the Jerome Park Reservoir as parkland would add needed recreational facilities for Kingsbridge Heights, including a running track.*

recreation. Longer-term recommendations include use of the historic structures and water supply infrastructure as the centerpieces of public plazas, and for reuse as cafés and other attractions. Future changes to the function of the Reservoir should be planned with local residents and groups such as the Jerome Park Conservancy. Improvements should be planned with consideration of the future site on-site water supply needs of this former racetrack to ensure that it remains a spectacular historic water element at the center of a new park for the northwest Bronx and New York City.

**F. Vestpocket Parks**

Southern portions of the district are relatively removed from large open space resources such as Van Cortlandt Park and Riverdale Park. To improve access to local open space in immediate walking distance of residential areas, opportunities for the creation of vestpocket parks should be identified. The Community Board, working with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and open space and local organizations, will identify possibilities for such local recreational areas, particularly in the Kingsbridge Heights neighborhood.

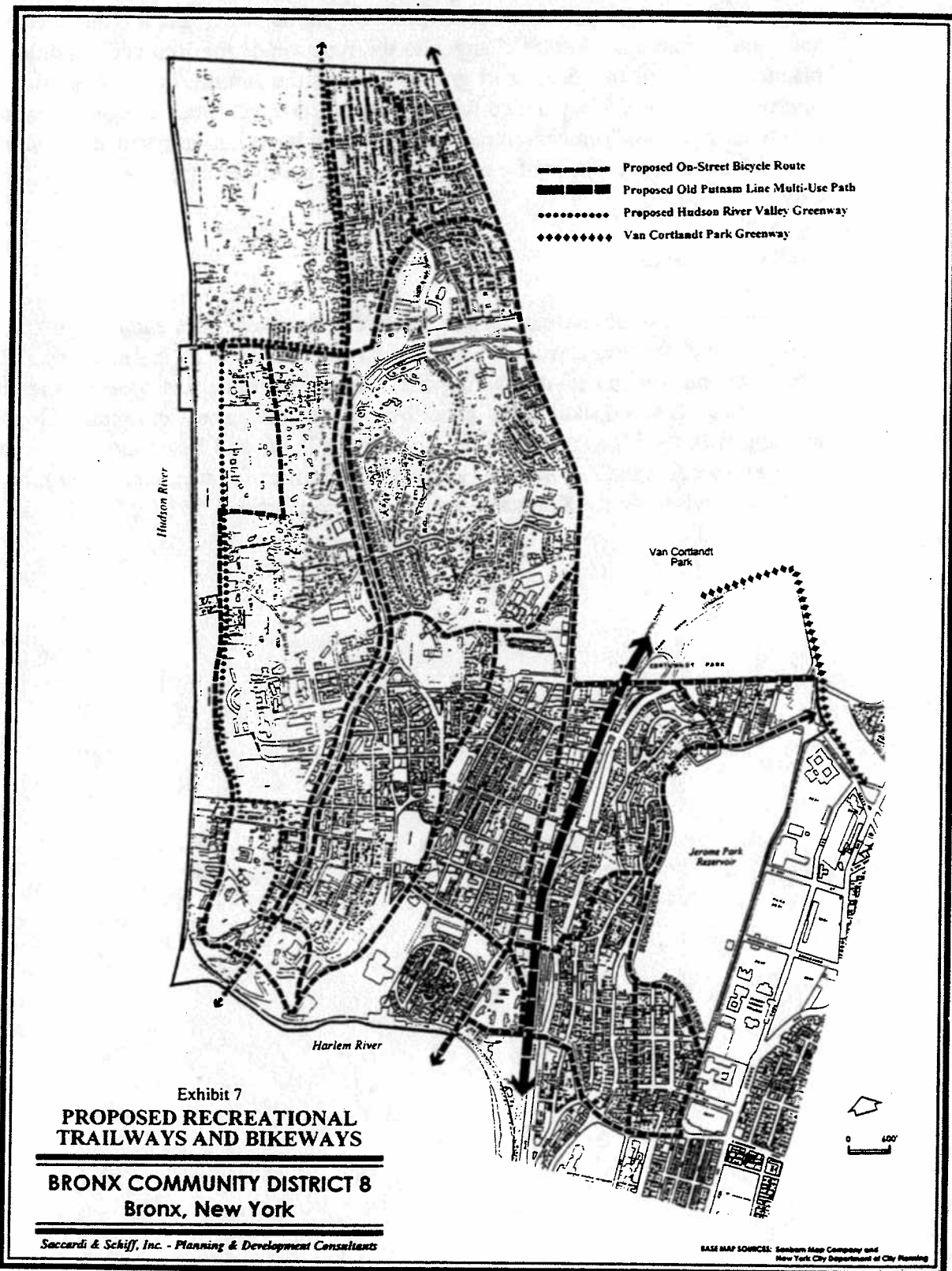


Exhibit 7  
**PROPOSED RECREATIONAL  
TRAILWAYS AND BIKEWAYS**  
**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8**  
**Bronx, New York**

Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants

BASE MAP SOURCE: Sanborn Map Company and  
New York City Department of City Planning

## VIII. Economic Development and Commercial Districts

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### A. Commercial Corridors

Commercial district improvements are an important component of the *CD8 2000 River to Reservoir Plan*. A comprehensive streetscape improvement program is proposed for further study along Broadway and other corridors that play a major role in shaping the community's identity. The goal is to upgrade the appearance of these major corridors, and improve landscaping, pedestrian safety and access to parking.

The formation of the Kingsbridge Business Improvement District (BID), covering portions of Broadway and 231<sup>st</sup> Street, is an important first step in moving forward on commercial district improvements. In the future, other BID or Merchant Association organizing efforts could be undertaken in other parts of the district, such as Kingsbridge Road, Riverdale Avenue, Johnson Avenue, Mosholu Avenue, and the Sedgwick Avenue/Bailey Avenue area.

Commercial district improvements initiated by the Borough President's office should be continued, working with the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (responsible for street trees), the Department of Business Services, and local groups. A coordinated plan to improve the atmosphere and safety of local shopping areas should be developed, addressing lighting, street furnishings, and store facades. Important gateway entry points along Broadway should be appropriately marked and landscaped. A program of installing consistent signage and possibly banners along commercial areas could highlight local attractions, such as historical sites, ethnic attractions including restaurants, and recreational attractions. The development of a banner program could draw on themes such as *The Bronx's Broadway: From the Harlem River to the Hudson Valley*, or *Experience Kingsbridge/Riverdale, from the River to the Reservoir*. The stretch of Riverdale Avenue between West 234<sup>th</sup> Street and West 261<sup>st</sup> Street is an additional area that should be targeted for such efforts and a comprehensive streetscape improvement program.

In addition to sidewalk and storefront improvements, streets along major corridors need to be retrofitted as pedestrian and bicycle friendly places, with safe and pleasant access to transit. The DOT should continue to install bicycle lane markings, given that the commercial thoroughfares also serve as links in an area-wide network of green paths and open spaces. These improvements should be planned with the input of area residents, local groups, and the Bronx Advisory Committee to the Hudson River Valley Greenway. The presence of the elevated IRT line needs to be considered in addressing constraints on traffic, and for beautification measures (see recommendation on IRT columns on page X-2).



*The health of commercial districts is crucial to the vitality of Community District #8. Pictured are the Kingsbridge (left) and Broadway (below) areas.*



**B. Local Business Support Center and Small Business Incubator**

Complementing the Plan proposals to preserve the physical attributes of the community are proposals to foster economic development and promote economic opportunities for District residents. To supplement existing programs and job training services, City agencies involved with economic development, such as the Department of Business Services and the New York City Economic Development Corporation, should work with local groups to create new economic engines for improved employment opportunities, including small business incubators for local high tech and start-up businesses. Existing space within the commercial and manufacturing-zoned portions of the district should be identified for a center that would provide business support services and shared infrastructure to local start-up companies using local skills and employees. Colleges and educational institutions within the district could potentially provide interns, business consulting, and support services. The creation of such a business support center or local small business incubator would be part of the broader theme of improved technology resources that is discussed in the next section of this Plan in relation to schools.

## IX. Educational, Social and Employment Opportunities

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### A. Schools

Improving the quality of the district's public education system is an important goal of the Bronx CD8 2000 River to Reservoir Plan. To address concerns exist in the community about the area's ability to attract and retain younger families with the current K-12 configuration in Community School District 10 and address overcrowding at the high school level, the CD8 2000 River to Reservoir Plan proposes a decentralized, neighborhood-building approach to improving K-12 educational services in Community School District 10, including creating the Kingsbridge Riverdale Academy at MS 141. The approach includes establishing smaller satellite schools to replace the oversized Kennedy High School, and establishing community-based centers where access to on-line resources can extend links between residents and the shared educational system. There is also a desire among residents to split School District #10 because of the large area that it encompasses. This issue should be referred for consideration to the New York City Board of Education, and eventually to the appropriate state officials and legislators who would be involved in the approval of such a boundary change.

Identification of sites and resources for building and repair of facilities are significant components of such a restructuring effort and are recommended for the long term. Other coordinated efforts should be made in the short term to support the success of School District 10 after-school programs. Dividing Kennedy High School into decentralized satellite magnet schools should be considered, in the manner applied to the former Julia Richman High School in Manhattan. Promising steps to coordinate initiatives and communication, and support local appropriation of new and renewed community offerings include:

- increase use of public schools for meeting space, recreation, and community activities for all ages;
- link the school computer system's Wide Area Network to local libraries and other education-centered, community-based organizations;
- link the Housing Authority's community centers' educational programs to public and private schools, establishing after-school programs in high density residential clusters;
- develop a community network and website to facilitate public access, activity coordination, and resource sharing among all educational agencies, providing widely-accessible terminals and support staff available particularly to parents and employment-seeking youth;



- provide increased levels of technical support and coordination in the public schools and associated sites, including network administrators, technician/trainers, turnkey trainers, full-time computer teachers, student groups to provide technical support, and facilitators for intra- and inter-agency technology planning and team building.

The major emphasis on wide-area networking and associated on-line communication systems supports the link between facilities planning and community stimulation through new programs and activities. A survey of successful school and community networks developed throughout the country is recommended to provide an ample assortment of models and consultants for such an effort in Community District #8 and School District 10. Human resource development would be critical to the success of such a large-scale community networking initiative. Turn-key training by experienced consultants over a three- to five-year period, sending computer trainers on-site to train the users of computers in area schools and associated sites to be self-sufficient, would successfully nurture the necessary linkages between community-based educational organizations to participate in, and take advantage of an integrated education, technology and community-building initiative as part of this 197-a Plan.

## **B. Libraries**

Expanding and enhancing area libraries is a key part of the 197-a Plan. The Kingsbridge Branch Library is half the size that a full-size regional branch library should be. The siting and construction of a new Kingsbridge Library is recommended to address this branch's critical need for shelving space in particular, but also for seating space, meeting space, and work rooms. Doubling the library's size would also permit increased access to computer terminals and the Internet. A new or expanded Kingsbridge Library could also serve to anchor the business district along Broadway and create an enhanced public destination within the community.

Another of the district's five libraries that has critical space needs is the Van Cortlandt Branch, which has only 2,200 square feet of floor area, though a full size branch library requires approximately 7,500 square feet. Continued support and funding will also be required to expand the Jerome Park Branch. Like the Kingsbridge Branch, both of these branches increasingly serve neighborhoods that have experienced an influx of younger families with children.

**C. Linked Educational Resources/Local Technology Consortium**

Another tool for empowering local residents and youth with skills and economic opportunities is increasing support for programs at after school centers, involving the schools, local housing groups, and community organizations. An example of an activity that could also tie into efforts to improve local technology resources is a tech scouts program for area youth, in conjunction with area schools. Mount St. Vincent's College, Manhattan College, Horace Mann, and other local schools could participate in such a program. The libraries could provide satellite centers connecting to on-line information and resources available as part of the local technology consortium. Seniors citizens could use the program as a means of learning much-needed access to on-line health and personal business information including information on benefits and entitlements, referrals, and local services and assistance. High school and college seniors would obtain career skills and information on job opportunities within the community through the linked computer resources organized by a consortium of area schools, institutions and community groups.

**D. Health, Hospitals and Social Services**

With the district's combined population trend of increasing numbers of elderly residents and increasing numbers of younger families with children, health and social services improvements are an important aspect of the *CD8 2000 River to Reservoir Plan*. Funding and support should be increased for the agencies that provide these important services. Meeting the needs of Community District #8 residents, including its seniors, for suitable housing, a safe environment, resources for socialization, and health services, is addressed through the following actions:

- increase hours of health centers in Community District #8, including available times when walk-in care is available;
- provide additional services for children, especially preventative health and preventative mental health programs for very young children and their parents;
- ensure adequate funding of mental health centers to meet the growing numbers of residents who need services at a reduced cost, and provide services to address mental health issues in the growing elderly population, especially depression, which are often overlooked;
- extend the meals assistance to needy elderly on weekends and holidays, and at times that are sufficient to service all of those eligible;
- find additional opportunities for group homes and apartments for mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, and psychiatrically disabled individuals;

*Educational, Social and Employment Opportunities*

- ensure the availability of adequate housing for the elderly as part of a general housing strategy for Community District #8, including assisted living housing, ancillary social and health services, and assistance for the frail elderly, homebound, and disabled.

## X. Transportation

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Transportation issues related to area neighborhoods include the need for increased parking, safer pedestrian crossings, improved access to local shopping for limited mobility populations, improved east-west access, and the creation of greenway linkages between major parks and existing and proposed linear open spaces. Recommendations related to transportation and parking include:

- provide public and special transportation for seniors for visits to physicians, hospitals, medical services, community centers, and other facilities, as well as for essential shopping trips and recreational/social activities. Consideration should also be given to the transportation needs not only of area seniors, but also of the health aides on whom they depend.
- add additional east-west bus routes, and increase the service frequency on existing routes, to address the problem of limited east-west access within Community District #8;
- undertake new bicycle facility and roadway improvements to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian safety and to encourage future use of alternative modes of transportation;
- to increase use of bicycles as a transportation mode, New York City Transit should consider installing bicycle racks on the outside of buses, with consideration of the impacts on traffic that could potentially occur during on and off-loading of bicycles from these exterior racks;
- require bicycle facilities as part of new development;
- apply pedestrian safety improvements, such as the installation of distinctive pavers or variegated crosswalk markings, at locations where vehicular-pedestrian conflicts are a concern to area residents, such as around area schools and at crossings of roadways and future greenway routes. Such traffic calming measures should be planned so as not to impact area-wide traffic flow;
- rebuild Marble Hill Avenue from West 225<sup>th</sup> Street to Adrian Avenue, and improve sidewalk conditions around the Marble Hill Metro-North Station and the 225<sup>th</sup> Street IRT Station. These actions would emphasize improved multi-modal connections within Community District #8;
- increase maintenance and sanitation for area step streets, particularly at West 230<sup>th</sup> Street, West 231<sup>st</sup> Street, and West 232<sup>nd</sup> Street;
- identify additional off-street and on-street parking opportunities, including the following:

## *Transportation*

- explore acquisition of the parking area on the south side of East 235<sup>th</sup> Street on the east side of Johnson Avenue for the creation of a bi-level municipal parking garage;
- identify an alternative parking solution for the 50<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct;
- through signage on Broadway, highlight weekend parking resources serving Van Cortlandt Park, directing motorists to existing parking facilities at the golf course and stable parking areas within the park;
- related to the Broadway municipal parking lot, greater enforcement of commercial parking restrictions are needed to ensure that daytime public parking spaces are not used for truck parking;
- identify additional parking opportunities to serve commercial uses in the vicinity of Knolls Crescent;
- explore the possibility of providing additional on-street parking spaces, including on the overpasses of the Major Deegan;
- increase enforcement and monitoring of contractors involved in roadway reconstruction projects, including the reconstruction of step streets, to lessen delays in completion of work which can inconvenience area residents, negatively impact on quality of life, and affect adjacent businesses;
- undertake IRT station improvements to improve security, access for the elderly and disabled and to improve aesthetic conditions and alleviate noise impacts;
- the location of the support columns of the Broadway IRT line within the bed of the roadway affects the attractiveness and efficiency of the Broadway corridor below West 242<sup>nd</sup> Street. In the long term, reconfiguration of these columns should be considered by New York City Transit to allow for increased maneuvering beneath the elevated tracks. Options for consideration include reconfiguration of the viaduct with center-of-the-street columns replacing the existing dual columns, or use of columns that are spread further apart and located on the sidewalk (this later option is used elsewhere in the city and was originally described as an option when the IRT was first designed in the early part of the century). Philadelphia's recent experience with the reconstruction of the Frankford Elevated provides an example of how such a structure can be replaced with construction scheduled

## *Transportation*

so as not to shut the line during weekdays. Given the high costs of such improvements, this recommendation is meant for further exploration and its feasibility will be dependent on the future availability of capital funds. Such improvements could be coupled with future rehabilitation work when scheduled, and could be limited to certain portions of the elevated where most needed to alleviate congestion, such as at the intersection of West 231<sup>st</sup> Street and Broadway. In the short term, bringing the sidewalk closer to the center of the roadway at bus stop locations should be considered to improve pedestrian access to buses and provide a secured location for those waiting for buses;

- secure adequate funding for implementation of major roadway improvement priorities, including the reconstruction of sections of Kappock Street, Independence Avenue, Tibbett Avenue, Marble Hill Avenue, Manhattan College Parkway, Waldo Avenue, Netherland Avenue, and the step streets;
- increase enforcement of truck routes, limiting the incursion of trucks within residential areas and improving neighborhood safety and quality of life;
- work with local and State Departments of Transportation to ensure that future roadway and highway improvement projects are planned in a manner that minimizes impacts on adjacent residences and recreational resources, and respects surrounding neighborhood character;
- where appropriate and where it would protect neighborhood character, ensure availability of the waiver of the requirement for construction of unbuilt street portions in front of properties that are being developed. This waiver is needed where there exist narrow, country-like streets and streets that do not match the mapped width of their rights-of-way.

## **XI. Consistency with Other City Plans and Policies**

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The 1997-a Plan's recommendations are generally consistent with the planning policies of the Borough President, the Department of City Planning, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and the other various City agencies that they affect. Specific plans and policies are addressed below.

### **A. Land Use**

Land use recommendations of the 197-a plan focus on preservation of the scale and character of area neighborhoods, a goal consistent with the City's lower density contextual rezoning program, begun in the late 1980's. The plan presents a comprehensive overview of opportunities for further mappings of lower density contextual districts and mid-rise contextual zoning districts that were formulated by the City to better match zoning to the form of established low and mid-rise neighborhoods.

The City Planning Commission and the Department of City Planning have in the past expressed a desire to only undertake neighborhood-wide rezoning actions that include some increases in development opportunities when reductions in development capacity are proposed through downzoning actions. While the proposals of the 197-a Plan do not include upzoning actions that would increase development capacity, this is due to the presence of development constraints of the area's limited roadway capacity and the potential for negative impacts on light, air, and the historical context of the area that could potentially result from development in excess of the scale and bulk of existing development. As expressed by area residents at public hearings for the 197-a Plan, and supported in the school utilization statistics presented in the 197-a Plan, the area's schools also do not have the capacity to absorb additional families with children. Given the limited ability of the area to absorb additional housing development, and the fact that most of the proposed rezoning actions entail equivalent contextual zones (such as an R3-1 or R3A district replacing an R3-2 or R3-1 district, or an R6A district replacing an R6 district) the Plan is not expected to have a significant adverse effect on future housing development opportunities. Additional residential development capacity will be retained, though in a form more appropriate for the unique neighborhood character and housing types present within District #8.

### **B. Scenic, Environmental and Historic Preservation**

The recommended creation of Special Scenic View District overlays and Special Hillside Preservation District overlays, the recommended designation of historic, cultural and scenic landmarks and districts, and recommended actions to link and jointly promote area cultural sites, are consistent with the goals of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Bronx Borough President, and the City. Efforts to

preserve the open space, cultural and historical sites, and quality of life of the City's neighborhoods are also consistent with policies of the Regional Plan Association as expressed in its *Third Regional Plan*.

**C. Housing**

Regarding future housing development opportunities, the Plan recommends revitalization of existing housing stock and the potential reuse of non-residential structures to promote housing upgrading. By fostering additional housing opportunities, the Plan is consistent with the City's strategic housing policy statement, the *Consolidated Plan* (annual report in support of the City's application to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for Community Planning and Development entitlement programs), and the Borough President's stated goal of increasing access to affordable housing. As stated in the Consolidated Plan, housing affordability is enhanced by the Quality Housing Program in R6 through R10 Districts, which the 197-a Plan promotes through its medium-density contextual rezoning recommendations. The higher coverage/lower rise development that the recommended R6A zone encourages allows for a more economical type of construction, according to the Consolidated Plan, and therefore also promotes goals related to affordable housing production.

**D. Recommended City-wide Zoning Text Changes**

While some of the 197-a Plan's proposals relate to City-wide zoning text changes that do not conform to existing zoning policy (revisions to zoning lot merger and community facility regulations), the inappropriateness of development resulting from the current regulations has been recognized by the City in its recent proposal to revise the New York City Zoning Ordinance. The 197-a Plan's proposed changes to these areas are consistent with the stated goals of the zoning reform initiative announced in April of 1999 by the Chairman of the City Planning Commission.

**E. Parks and Open Space**

Open space and parks proposals contained within the 197-a Plan related to Van Cortlandt Park are generally consistent with policies of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. However, the recommendation to designate historic and cultural sites within the park within a new historic district, and the recommendation to pave the Old Putnam Line railway for use as a multi-purpose trailway are two issues that have not yet been resolved by the Parks Department as it continues its planning process and community dialogue over future improvements to Van Cortlandt Park.



The recommendation to designate a greenway route within Community District #8 as part of the Hudson River Valley Greenway is consistent with the policy of the City to include New York City in this region-wide greenway network that will extend north of the City up the Hudson River. 197-a Plan recommendations to foster bikeways throughout the district support recommendation of the Department of City Planning and the Department of Transportation to create designated bicycle routes in each of the five boroughs as part of a major city-wide bicycle route. The 197-a Plan's recommended on-street recreational bikeway network includes roadway portions that have not yet been included in the City's Bicycle Network Development Program.

#### **F. Waterfront**

Reach 6 of the New York City Department of City Planning's 1993 *Plan for the Bronx Waterfront* presented a range of open space and greenway recommendations for Community District #8. The proposed 197-a Plan supports the recommendations of the Reach 6 Plan, with minor differences related to the specific route of the recommended Hudson River Greenway. The Reach 6 Plan recommended a route extending into Riverdale Park, whereas the 197-a Plan, consistent with the recommendation of the Bronx Advisory Task Force to the Hudson River Valley Greenway, recommended a slightly different route that would avoid bringing bicycle traffic through Riverdale Park, in order to protect the sensitive environmental resources found within the park. Access to the waterfront is recommended for Riverdale station in the 197-a Plan, whereas the Reach 6 Plan goes beyond the recommendations of the Bronx Advisory Task Force to the Hudson River Valley Greenway in recommending additional pedestrian crossings of the railroad tracks and the creation of access points at the Dodge Dock in Riverdale Park, and at Spuyten Duyvil.

By recommending increased access to the waterfront and increased protections of the scenic and environmental features of waterfront areas, the 197-a Plan is consistent with the City's Coastal Zone Management policies. Consistent with the *New Waterfront Revitalization Program: A Proposed 197-a Plan*, which was published as a draft report by the Department of City Planning in 1997, the proposed CB8 197-a Plan recommends use of the Hudson for recreational boating, increased public access to the waterfront, protection of scenic resources that contribute to the visual quality of the coastal area, strengthened protections for the quality and function of ecological systems within the coastal area, and preservation of resources significant to the historical, archeological, and cultural legacy of the New York City coastal area.

**G. Commercial District Recommendations**

Recommendations related to the area's commercial corridors are consistent with City and Borough President's policies to strengthen local commercial districts. Implementation is ongoing with the process of BID designation for the Broadway/231<sup>st</sup> Street environs. The recommendation to revise large scale retail zoning, while ensuring protection of neighborhood commercial character and recognizing traffic constraints, recognizes that there is a need to foster additionally needed retail services. This is consistent with the City's stated goal of invigorating commercial districts and retaining shopping dollars that are spent in other parts of the region, where land use regulations are more supportive of a wider range of retail uses.

**H. Education and Services**

Service and education-related recommendations of the 197-a Plan are consistent with the overall City policy of improving quality of life and access to services for City residents. Recommendations for the Board of Education related to technology improvements and study of the reconfiguration of schools within Community School District #10 will require further consultation with BOE, but are consistent with general Board of Education policies that have promoted innovative technology improvements and the restructuring of overly-large high schools, such as the former Julia Richman High School in Manhattan.

**I. Transportation**

Traffic recommendations to foster increased access to transit, improved parking, and improved pedestrian safety are consistent with policies of the Department of Transportation, which has recently focused on safer streets and has, in the past, examined ways to increase access to parking in the area's commercial districts. Due to the high costs that would be involved, staff of New York City Transit do not support the long term recommendation to consider reconstruction of the support columns of the elevated Broadway IRT line in order to enhance traffic circulation and the appearance of the Broadway corridor, but rather see pedestrian safety enhancements tried elsewhere in the Bronx such as sidewalk extensions as being a more feasible approach.

## **APPENDICES**

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**APPENDIX A**

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**197-a Plan Public Hearing Summaries**

**Introduction: Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.**

**Chairman Robert Moll:** Opens meeting for questions on the presentation, and then general comments:

**Public Comments:**

Comment 1 (Alan Denison):

Stella D'Oro should not be seen as a place to permit housing development, since this would inhibit the area's economic development potential.

Comment 2 (Tom Bird):

The Plan should address the diplomatic missions within the District. The Russian Mission building is an eyesore and is unsafe. How can this be addressed?

Consultant Response:

The Plan can recommend increased enforcement efforts on the part of the Buildings Department. However, diplomatic missions have a particular legal status, and it may not be possible to restrict their use.

Comment 3 (Anne-Marie Garti):

Sedgwick Avenue in the Van Cortlandt Village vicinity and the roadway leading west towards the Major Deegan has become a safety problem. It is being turned into a fast-moving-traffic artery in a piecemeal way. This needs to be stopped. The Olmstead-designed streets of this area and its peaceful ambiance need to be protected. What can be done?

Consultant Response:

Traffic calming measures could be examined, particularly when in close proximity to area schools.

Comment 4 (Janet Golovner):

The Department of Transportation has expressed interest in the past in expanding the lane capacity of the Major Deegan. This will have negative impacts on our neighborhoods. Improvements to the Cross Bronx Expressway that would induce traffic and air quality problems need to be prevented. There is also concern over a proposal to deck over the Major Deegan.

Comment 5 (Laurie Hogan):

High rise development within Yonkers will negatively impact the adjacent portion of Community District #8.

Consultant Response:

The 197-a Plan is a guide to City agencies. Recommendations to the New York State DOT are beyond the purview of 197-a plans. The plan cannot be used to recommend actions that are outside of the City's jurisdiction.

Comment 6 (Joanne Odrich):

The Preliminary Issues Identification Report incorrectly identifies Fieldston. The report states that neighborhood boundaries are subjective. Fieldston's boundaries are legally defined, with a Home Owners Association having control over its development. Institutions such as Horace Mann are not considered to be part of Fieldston, per se.

Comment 7 (Terry Bastone):

Similarly, the Kingsbridge area needs to be differentiated within the report between the Kingsbridge and the Kingsbridge Heights areas.

Comment 8 (Bill Abramson):

How can schools and education be included in the 197-a Plan's recommendations? Specifically, how can the Riverdale Academy proposal be forwarded?

Consultant Response:

Education must be addressed as part of any comprehensive plan. It is of critical importance to the future of the community. However, specific proposals that the School Board does not support will be difficult to include, since agencies need to be in agreement with the Plan's recommendations, and their future actions are required for implementation.

Comment 9 (Unidentified Commentor):

Transportation recommendations will need further detailing and need to be addressed.

Comment 10 [Assemblyman Dinowitz]:

Parks and open space need to be emphasized. We need to achieve the vision of the Jerome Park Conservancy. Legislation has been introduced for Home Rule powers that would legislatively allow the designation of parkland within the Reservoir environs. Construction activities of an industrial nature, specifically the Filtration Plant, need to be prevented within Van

Cortlandt Park. Kingsbridge is the main commercial district in Community District 8 and the Business Improvement District effort needs to be supported.

Related to schools and education, the combined high school at MS 141 is not the only issue in the district. Overcrowding is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. Expanding and finding a new home for the Kingsbridge Library is also critical. It is half the size that it should be. Along with traffic calming measures, there is a need to lower speed limits in the District.

Greater outreach efforts should have been undertaken by the consultants. Areas such as Marble Hill and Van Cortlandt Village need to have a greater emphasis.

Comment 11 (Terry Bastone):

An interview that had been requested of me by the consultant was never done. Traffic congestion is a critical issue. Also, there is a need to prevent the introduction of "Big Box" retail uses into our manufacturing and commercial areas.

Chairman/Consultant Response:

Interviews conducted by the previous consultant that had prepared a Phase I report have been utilized by the current consultant. Both of your organizations were interviewed, and the summaries of those interviews have been utilized as part of the current consultant's analysis.

Comment 12 (Janet Golovner):

As Executive Director of the Kingsbridge Riverdale Development Corporation I support a comprehensive approach to the 197-a Plan. It should address housing needs. However, use of the Stella D'Oro site and its surrounding manufacturing area for housing is inappropriate. This area should be continued for light manufacturing uses, including micro-enterprises. "Big Box" retail uses should also be prevented in these M-zoned lands on the east side of Broadway. The Business Improvement District has received CB8 pre-approval and is now being delayed due to city-wide events regarding BID policies. My organization supports the reuse of the Putnam line railway right-of-way as linear open space. We have concerns over expansions of the Major Deegan.

Comments 13 (Petr Stand):

The concerns over zoning compliance as a result of rezoning actions should not preclude rezonings that will protect the scale of our neighborhoods. The Board should meet with DEP over the Filtration Plant issue. It is important to realize that one of the benefits of the 197-a planning process, which is equally as great as the resulting document, is the process of community empowerment and getting resident input. There needs to be greater outreach efforts and more public sessions.

We need to look at the number of available school seats more carefully. The Jonas Bronk Academy initiative needs to be stressed. Finally, the preliminary issues identification report needs to be clearer in its language, particularly in its explanation of zoning concepts.

Comment 14 (Anne-Marie Garti):

The discussion of the Van Cortlandt Village neighborhood lacks integrity due to the segmentation of issues. For instance, the Jerome Park Reservoir is a central feature that defines the area. We need a plan for the area that will go beyond being just a parks plan to being a plan for community revitalization and historic preservation. My organization is seeking to have it designated as the City's first scenic landmark. The area's Olmstead designed streets need to be protected. The Jerome Park Reservoir should be designated not only on the National Register of Historic Places, which is non-regulatory, but as a New York City Scenic landmark. Its buildings should be designated as New York City landmarks. Residents should be granted access to the water's edge.

Related to housing and zoning, we need to preserve the mix of single-family homes and not encourage the development of large apartment buildings. Revitalization should be emphasized. We also need to fold traffic issues into the plan. The reconstruction of Mosholu Parkway for safety purposes has turned the area into a highway interchange and has detracted from community character. We need traffic calming measures. We should recognize the close interrelationship between auto congestion, air quality and the poor health statistics in the community, with higher rates of asthma, for example.

Comment 15 (Councilwoman June Eisland):

Regarding the approach to formulating recommendations for the 197-a Plan, we should be bold and imaginative. Regarding compliance with City policies, start with what you do want, even if you might not end up with all of those recommendations being included. Important recommendations include strengthening commercial areas, bringing in new blood, but also nurturing the commercial uses that already exist. We need to bring more anchors into these areas, without overpowering what exists now. Regarding housing, we need to strengthen and keep our existing housing stock, while retaining the area's open space, recreational facilities, and enhancing the area's libraries and schools as part of the planning process. We should learn from the Melrose Commons planning process that there is a tremendous amount of elasticity in terms of approaches to City policy. My staff is available for any reviews of the study's findings or for assistance in explaining issues to the public.

Comment 16 (Robert Reich):

It is important to realize that the 197-a planning process is iterative. The Preliminary Issues identification Report is only a start and there will be other meetings such as tonight's where recommendations can be refined and added to.

Parks and open space planning have been a focus of the discussions as well. Greenway planning includes a proposal for the reuse of the Putnam Line right-of-way as a linear open space. The Jerome Park Reservoir is seen as a potential recreational resource, with recommendations to open the reservoir's banks for public access and recreation. Actions have also been recommended to improve Van Cortlandt Park as a resource for area residents. This can include improving its facilities, such as adding restroom facilities in its northern portions, and recognizing historic resources within the park.

Improvements to the area's commercial corridors have also been discussed. Improved pedestrian conditions including lighting and landscaping are needed, along with additional parking and access improvements. The effort to implement a BID can also be supported within the 197-a Plan.

These are some of the recommendations that have been discussed. We'd like to hear from you about specific issues that you think need to be looked at.



**Community Board #8 197-a Public Hearing  
March 11, 1999**

Introduction and background summary: Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.

**Public Comments**

Mr. Robert Rubenstein, Counsel, Passionist Fathers Retreat:

Since 1926, our spiritual center on 15 acres has been dedicated to preserving the environment. Our plans do not include development but the retreat should not be precluded from future development of its site because it does not have a master plan in place.

The Board and its consultants have neglected to get the input of our institution. Concerns that we have relate to the proposed restrictions on the community facility bonus provisions. The Passionist fathers also oppose proposed scenic view district regulations that would limit the use of their site for development. They also oppose greater restrictions on the Special Natural Area District regulations. These create parameters that restrict the use of their property and would be a seizure of their property. The Passionist Fathers Retreat requests that the continued use of the community facility bonus be allowed for existing institutions. Further restrictions would limit the ability of the Retreat to negotiate with lenders. Mr. Rubenstein and his clients are outraged that the Board would propose such restrictions that would limit their property rights.

Response from Chairman Moerdler:

The Greenbelt has been expanded since its creation. This has not affected the mortgageability of properties within its boundaries.

Arnold Hyman, Regional Librarian, Kingsbridge Library

Library services are critical to a healthy and vibrant community. However, current library facilities within the district are not able to meet the great demand for PC access and internet terminals, for example. The expansion of the libraries needs to be included as a policy in the 197-a Plan. The 8,360-square foot Kingsbridge branch has limited seating capacity. This library and the Van Cortlandt and Jerome Park libraries all have insufficient shelving, storage space and meeting rooms. The Kingsbridge branch serves Kennedy High School, PS 7, PS 207 and PS 37. There is usually overcrowding in the afternoons. The Van Cortlandt branch is only 2,200 square feet. A 7,500-square foot building is needed. The Jerome Park library is overcrowded due to the increase in young families in the area. New immigrants in this area require expanded library services.

Donald Cohen - Riverdale Nature Preservancy.

The maximum permitted Floor Area Ratio should be lowered to 0.5 in the entire Special Natural Area District (SNAD) and the Open Space ratio should be 200. This would not be a downzoning in terms of use.

Community facilities in the SNAD can now potentially triple their floor area, including Mt. Saint Vincent, the Riverdale School, the Hebrew Home for the Aged and the Passionist Fathers Retreat. Horace Mann has an additional four acres on which it can expand. RNP has also been discussing the possibility of an easement program to preserve open space. State funding for an easement purchase program might be available. We need to reconcile the obligation of community facilities to the community.

RNP also supports the creation of a Scenic View District. The extension of the Riverdale Historic District also needs to be considered.

The 197-a Plan should be used as a tool to maintain the beneficial qualities of Community District #8 and to prevent people from exploiting the area's qualities.

Chairman Moerdler Response: There are two to three applications for improvements that come from the Historic District. Property owners may have concerns regarding limitations on improvements to their properties. This is also my personal concern, although views have varied on this issue. The Board has supported the issue of landmark designations in the past. Many of the applications have worked out just fine.

Regarding the issue of the prohibiting "sliver buildings," such actions would have prevented recent high rise construction facing the Henry Hudson Parkway.

Dan Slattery, College of Mount St. Vincent

On behalf of Mary Stewart of the College, I'd like to assure you tonight that we support the 197-a Plan effort. The College has a tradition of being honorable neighbors that contribute to the community. We share your concern regarding unwanted growth. The College acts from the perspective of being stewards of our campus. We hope to continue to work with the community in the future.

However, it should be noted that while our enrollment is strong now, we could potentially become overburdened in the future. We will need to review our space needs at that time. If improvements were necessary, we would be respectful of the qualities of our campus. Restrictions on development of our campus would cause difficulties in obtaining financial support. We therefore oppose any restrictions on the community facilities bonus provisions. Cooperative institutions should be exempt from any changes in the regulations.

Laura Spalter, President, Riverdale Community Association

Our vision is to maintain the positive attributes of our neighborhoods. This includes preserving the natural areas of the district. We also need to prevent the incursion of industrial uses into the area's neighborhoods including the filtration plant proposal now being considered. Instead, we should utilize the Jerome Park Reservoir as parkland.

Additional concerns that our organization has relate to the community facility bonus. . . Additional restrictions are needed. We also need to expand the area that the Special natural Area District covers. Additional contextual rezonings are needed to protect the scale of our neighborhoods.

Representative of Assemblyman Jeffery Dinowitz introduced.

Sister Dolores Smith, Sisters of Charity

The interests of the College and the Sisters of Charity coincide. We are concerned that greater restrictions proposed as part of this process will be detrimental to our organizations. The Riverdale section already has very restrictive zoning. We have a long history in this community, dating back to 1857, including our current 100-member community. We are a stable part of the community and have no intention of leaving. The plan should propose continuation of the current zoning regarding community facilities. Additional restrictions would affect access to lending sources for our institution. Such restrictions cannot solve all of the community's concerns.

Assemblyman Dinowitz

The Plan needs to recognize the distinct needs and attributes of each section of the district. In some sections, issues relate to open space preservation, while in others there is a need to upgrade. Recent development proposals threaten open space resources. Illegal overcrowding is also an issue. We need to find ways to address and reverse persistent problems in the district. This Plan can serve to maintain the qualities of the area.

Alfreda Bledsoe, Resident of Marble Hill Houses

We need to have representation from Marble Hill residents here. The Housing Authority should ensure quality of life in Marble Hill Houses including better maintaining the community's trees. Better maintenance is needed. Greater oversight over the Housing Authority will help to maintain the area and ensure its future stability. Regarding landscaping, Department pruning needs to be done in a way that better ensures the health of trees. Protection of the area's trees should be included in the 197-a Plan.

DRAFT Meeting Summary: Bronx Community Board #8 Public Hearing on 197-a Plan, 4/21/99, Riverdale Temple

**Introduction: Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.**

The Special Natural Area District was created in the 1970's, in response to rapid growth in Riverdale, Spuyten Duyvil and Fieldston. It was intended to protect unique natural features of the area, including its steep slopes and rock outcrops. The regulations set up additional CPC review procedures for development, enlargements and site alterations. These procedures include certification, authorization and Special Permit applications, depending on the level of impact of a particular action. The regulations only apply to development on lots greater than 40,000 square feet in size

In preliminary discussions over the 197-a Plan, the Community Board #8 Land Use Committee and the Riverdale Nature Preservancy discussed the need to strengthen the protections of open space and community character in the SNAD. Proposals have also been forwarded in the past to extend area that is covered. At last month's meeting, representatives from several of the major institutions expressed their concerns over additional regulations. This perspective needs to be kept in mind, as well as the policies of the approving agencies for the 197-A Plan in formulating the recommendations for the 197-a Plan.

Preliminary discussions for the 197-a Plan have included a number of proposed zoning changes to the SNAD. These fall on a spectrum from least to greatest impact, ranging from increasing the CB review period for SNAD applications, to creating a new Special Permit process that requires master plans for institutional lands and disclosure of future development capacity before increased development bulk or community facility bonuses are granted.

Other recommendations include preserving scenic roadway features, such as road widths, extending the Riverdale Historic District, limiting Transfers of Development Rights and Zoning Lot Mergers (Chairman Moerdler suggests that this is a District-wide issue, and could entail requiring applicants for TDR's and ZLM's to notify the Board and surrounding property owners prior to applying for such actions). Limitations on TDR's and ZLM's are some of the most far reaching of the recommendations discussed for the SNAD. Downzoning has been proposed for the area to the largest lot residential district - which is the R1-1. If downzoning actions are recommended, the rezoning areas will need further refinement to ensure adequate compliance of existing development with the R1-1 regulations.

The second topic for discussion tonight is the Community Facility Bonus. This is a generic zoning issue, affecting all districts where community facilities are permitted. Public meeting comments have also been divided over this issue. Existing regulations clearly provide a larger building envelope for community facility development than for residential development. In addition, a bonus of additional floor area is permitted for

certain design features, such as providing a deep front yard, which can result in a 20% increase in allowable floor area.

Residents have expressed concerns over impacts on neighborhood character as a result of community facility expansions. While also seeking to balance the needs of local institutions and community concerns, the 197-a Plan can seek to guide community facility development by addressing the underlying zoning that regulates the growth of these uses. For instance, recommendations can seek to discourage larger bulkier buildings from narrow street locations. In some locations, community facility and residential envelopes (development potential) could be similar, rather than permitting greater community facility bulk.

Special Scenic View Districts are the final topic for tonight. Scenic View Districts are special purpose districts, like the SNAD. The 197-a Plan can propose mapping the Special Scenic View District to protect views of scenic resources such as the Palisades, the Hudson River, and the Jerome Park Reservoir.

Scenic View Districts are mapped around a public place, such as street or park, where a scenic view exists. To map a scenic view district, a view plane is established, which development cannot penetrate or obstruct. Only by CPC authorization or Special Permit can this be modified to permit development blocking views.

#### **Public Comments:**

Comment 1 (Donald Cohen, Riverdale Nature Preservancy (RNP)):

The RNP's proposals include amending the allowable density for the SNAD to limit allowable floor area to 0.4 FAR. Current R1 zoning permits a maximum allowable FAR of 0.5 F.A.R. Because existing development is characterized by F.A.R.'s of 0.5, this action is not considered to be a downzoning. Previous analyses commissioned by the RNP has demonstrated that the area has a potential development build-out of 3.5 million square feet at the existing 0.5 F.A.R. maximum. The lowered maximum permitted F.A.R. of 0.5 would result in a reduced build out capacity of 1.5 million square feet.

Other proposals of the RNP include historic preservation and the creation of scenic view districts, including from Riverdale Park and from Wave Hill. Spuyten Duyvil is another potential area for examination, should the residents support scenic view district legislation. The RNP offers its assistance in developing view planes and creating these districts.

Chairman Moerdler:

If it is agreeable, a wrap up public hearing will be held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to complete the discussion of the SNAD proposals. Following that date, the consultants will draft an executive summary of 197-a Plan recommendations over the summer, for review by the Community Board's Executive Committee at its first meeting following the summer break.

Comment 2 (Bill Abrahms):

Another location for consideration for the mapping of a special scenic view district could be from the Broadway Bridge to Riverdale Park.

Chairman Moerdler:

The issue of forfeiture of property rights is raised with the notion of the scenic view district. This will need to be considered along with the benefits of preserving special views.

Comment 3 (Assemblyman Dinowitz):

The Jerome Park Reservoir needs to be a focus for the plan, not only for its scenic views, but also for its historic resources and its potential to be designated as parkland. The Jerome Park Conservancy is working with Albany legislators on a home rule law to declare the reservoir property parkland. Public use of the reservoir property is a goal of the community.

Comment 4: Chairman Moerdler:

Might there not be given consideration to designating the Jerome Park Reservoir as an historic landmark? The rock outcrops that surround the reservoir and its unique man made context also make it a candidate for designation as a Special natural Area. Its historical background includes being the site of the first United Nations meeting.

Comment 5 (Brother Barry):

Consideration should be given to maintaining water flow into the reservoir if it is removed as a component of the New York City water supply. Otherwise, a dry lake will be created.

Comment 6 (Councilwoman June Eisland's Representative):

June Eisland supports the Board's efforts to preserve its unique natural and historic resource. This includes the designation of the Jerome Park Reservoir as a landmark.

Comment 7 (Thomas Bird):

The 197-a Plan should consider the future use and recommendations for Van Cortlandt Park, which is one of the district's major assets.

In terms of historical background for the park and for Kingsbridge and Van Cortlandt Village, Peter Ostrander, President of the Kingsbridge Historical Society, can serve as a resource for background information. William Tieck's book, *the History of the Northwest Bronx*, can be obtained at the Kingsbridge Library. The Kingsbridge Riverdale Van Cortlandt Development Corporation also has copies of this resource.

Another concern is the potential for development above the air rights of the Penn Central Corporation's commuter rail right-of-way. Previous proposals in the 1960's and the 1980's included high rise development. The air rights above these tracks should be re-examined.

DRAFT Meeting Summary: Bronx Community Board #8 Public Hearing on 197-a Plan, 6/3/99, at 254<sup>th</sup> Street

**Public Comments:**

Comment 1 (Karen Argenti, Jerome Park Conservancy):

Additional public hearings are needed on the 197-a Plan. An extension of the process is requested.

The areas around Giles Place and Sedgwick Avenues are already densely developed. No further development should be permitted there.

The Jerome Park Conservancy has prepared a Park Plan for the Jerome Park Reservoir. This area should also be designated as a scenic historic district. The route of the Old Croton Aqueduct is an example of a site with potential for designation as an historic landmark.

The Community Facility bonus should be eliminated, as it results in inappropriate development. Community facility expansions in the area west of the Reservoir have consumed previous residentially developed sites.

Comment 2 (Brother Barry)

The Reservoir requires water to be fed into it, or it will dry up. If it is taken off-line from the New York City water supply system, a pump should be installed to provide water to maintain it. Otherwise it could revert back to being a racetrack.

Comment 3 (Mary McCloughlin)

Fort 4 Park is a unique historic resource that is in need of protections for its scenic qualities, overlooking the Reservoir. There is a need to downzone areas to the west of the Jerome Park Reservoir. No additional development is needed. School facility expansions have been occurring without the addition of necessary recreational space.

Comment 4 (Edward Yaeger, Amalgamated Houses)

The Jerome Park Reservoir should be treated as a unique scenic and historic resource in the 197-a Plan. What positions will the Plan take on upzonings? Residents are opposed to any such rezoning actions.

Comment 5 (Janet Golovner, Kingsbridge Riverdale Van Cortlandt Development Corporation)

KRVDC reiterates its positions on the Plan's recommendations. These include limiting the types of commercial development permitted in the Broadway manufacturing district

to no more than 10,000 square feet. Otherwise, as per existing zoning, a Special Permit should be required for larger developments.



## March 9, 2000 Bronx Community Board 8 197-a Plan Public Hearing Summary

### Introduction/Overview

In the months since the Land Use Committee last met on the plan, a draft version has been prepared entitled *CB8 2000: a River to Reservoir Preservation Strategy*.

The plan makes recommendations in a number of areas, including education, parks and open space, and commercial districts, but focuses primarily on zoning regulations and land use.

It is a Draft Plan and is being modified to incorporate further comments and clarifications. It should be pointed out that once consensus is reached on plan recommendations, a Preliminary Plan will be submitted to the Department of City Planning for their review and a process of dialogue and revisions before it is voted on. If approved, zoning and other recommendations will need to be implemented over time, and will be subject to further public review.

This local planning effort comes at a time when the City is rethinking its development regulations overall, as you heard at last month's meeting.

The River to Reservoir Plan goes beyond the city's current attempts at limiting height of development and simplifying the zoning regulations.

197-a Plan recommendations include zoning mapping actions to preserve the scale and configuration of housing within specific geographic areas, ranging from detached homes to mid-rise apartment district contexts.

They also include special purpose district recommendations, such as a Hillside Preservation District, and a Special Scenic View District, and strengthening protections of natural features and community character in the Special Natural Area District.

For community facility development, the plan balances the needs of existing institutions in the area with the need to protect the scale and character of existing residential areas.

I should point out that a clarification is being made to the Plan regarding community facility recommendations to be consistent with the Land Use Committee's position. A revision is being made to indicate that for the Special Natural Area District, existing institutions should continue to be able to utilize the existing development rights that they are currently entitled to after showing that potential negative environmental or traffic impacts can be mitigated. However, it is recommended that new community facilities in the Special Natural Area District would need to go through a new Special Permit process to utilize the greater bulk afforded by the current regulations. This would require full ULURP review for these new uses, while permitting the existing institutions to be grandfathered in terms of their development rights, meaning the old regulations would still apply to them upon a showing that potential negative impacts can be addressed.

For commercial development, the plan lays out guideline recommendations on how to minimize visual impacts, and foster street oriented, pedestrian friendly uses.

These are the land use related recommendations of the plan. Some other areas include parks and recreation, including reuse of the Putnam Line Right-of-way and making roadway and crosswalk safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.

Before we open the floor to questions and discussion, please keep in mind that this 197-a Plan project is a process, and that the next step after reaching consensus here is for the Department of City Planning to review and comment on the recommendations. After plan modifications and an environmental review, it will be voted on by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

We would like to use the rest of this evening's meeting to hear additional comments and answer questions that you might have regarding the plan.

### **Comments**

#### **Marcia Allina, Secretary, Riverdale Nature Preservancy (RNP)**

We support the strengthening of protections for natural features and neighborhood character, and the extension of the Special Natural Area District (SNAD).

We recommend that the maximum permitted FAR be reduced to 0.4 FAR in the SNAD. This would preclude massive structures and inappropriate expansions, such as the recent expansion of the residence known locally as the Kennedy Mansion. Such a change would still permit development and expansions to occur, but in a more controlled way.

RNP also supports greater controls on community facility development and expansion.

We support the reuse of the Putnam Line Right-of-Way for a recreational trailway, though we oppose the recommendation to designate streets in Riverdale north of West 254<sup>th</sup> Street as a pedestrian route. These narrow and winding streets would not be safe for such use. We recommend that the route turn up 254<sup>th</sup> Street and proceed north on Riverdale Avenue instead. We oppose any use of Riverdale Park for a bicycle route.

We recommend a trial period for waterfront passive recreation near the Riverdale train station. Maintenance will be an issue for any such proposal.

We further recommend that the Plan give support to the numerous service agencies that are so important to the community. Increased funding for these social service agencies should be recommended.

#### **Travis Eppes, Fieldston Property Owners Association**

The Fieldston community is a well defined area that encompasses only those areas under the purview of the Fieldston Property Owners Association. This should be clarified in the Plan.

The zoning recommendations for Fieldston do not address all of the areas that require rezoning to protect neighborhood scale from inappropriate development. Only 160 of Fieldston's 260 lots (or about three fifths of the lots) are recommended for rezoning to R1-1.

Fieldston is a cohesive community. All of Fieldston should be treated uniformly by the Plan's rezoning recommendations.

We oppose the recommendation to designate privately owned streets within Fieldston (244<sup>th</sup> Street, Tibbett Avenue, Waldo Avenue) as a bicycle route, since this would raise liability issues.

The Plan should be careful not to be overly burdensome on individual homeowners in its recommendation to impose stricter SNAD-2 protections. Some allowances will need to be made, in terms of tree protections, for homeowners to still be able to remove unwanted trees for routine maintenance purposes. Allowances for taking down one tree every five years might be one solution that would be a compromise that would still avoid clear cutting of trees. An expensive approval procedure for such necessary maintenance is overly burdensome.

Irving Ladimer, Community Board 8, Aging Committee

Aging Committee recommendations have not been sufficiently addressed in the Plan, including the growing needs of the elderly. These include safety needs, which should be addressed through improved lighting. A senior center is needed. Transportation improvements should address not only the needs of the elderly, but the transportation needs of the health aides on whom they depend.

The Plan should also address housing needs of the elderly and suggest a mechanism to help elderly remain in their homes if they so desire. Stronger language should be used in the Plan to stress the needs of the elderly.

Honorable Councilwoman June Eisland

The Plan will need to balance the community's desires with the stated policies of the City Planning Commission, which will need to approve the Plan. The Little Neck community in Queens recently had its 197-a Plan rejected by the Commission, although pieces of it are now being agreed on. This will need to be taken into consideration in formulating recommendations.

There should be consideration of the needs of the elderly in the district, which has a naturally occurring concentration of elderly.

We support the plan's approach to community preservation, including designation of a scenic view district.

I urge the Board's consultants to meet with my staff to go over additional comments on the Plan.

E. Allen Dennison, Member, Community Board #8

Institutions in the area should not be granted increased development rights automatically [on an as-of-right basis]. A conditional approval process is needed for institutional expansions that would give the Community Board greater input in deciding whether community facility development or expansions are in the best interest of the community.

**APPENDIX B**

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**Neighborhood Association Questionnaires**

*Bronx Community Board #8 197-a Plan  
 Neighborhood Association Questionnaire - Summary of Responses\*  
 3/9/99*

**Amalgamated Housing**

*Neighborhood Improvement  
 Priorities*

1. Oppose Filtration Plant construction.
2. Enforce laws requiring dog owners to clean up after their pets.
3. Improve playground equipment.
4. Add bus shelters near Stevenson Place and Dickenson Place.

*Community District-wide  
 Priorities*

1. Oppose Filtration Plant
2. Foster the creation of bikeways (including in-line skating).
3. maintain and improve the quality of public schools.

*Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Improve access to parking; provide additional after-school programs; preserve "Mom and Pop" stores; restore Putnam Line railroad right-of-way as a bikeway.

**Association of Riverdale Cooperatives**

*Neighborhood and Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Establish a high school for Riverdale and Kingsbridge area.
2. Eliminate Community Facility zoning bonus provisions.
3. Increase power of Community Board in controlling future development.
4. Improve local business districts with additional Business Improvement District proposal for Johnson Avenue, Knolls Crescent, Riverdale business district.

**Fielston Property Owners Association, Inc.**

*Neighborhood Improvement  
 Priorities*

1. Revise zoning to limit new development to single-family housing only.
2. Greater enforcement of building and zoning code provisions.
3. Eliminate commercial vehicular through traffic, apply traffic calming measures.
4. Create new and enforce existing noise restrictions.
5. Develop more efficient sanitation collection schedules.

*Community District-wide  
 Priorities*

1. Ensure good public schools.
2. Ensure safe streets.
3. Reduce auto theft and vandalism.
4. Ensure safe subways.
5. Improve access to parking.

*Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Eliminate community facilities bonus zoning provisions; prevent and remove graffiti; restore northbound Henry Hudson Parkway entrance/exit (W. 239th Street); preserve neighborhood scale and curb trend towards construction of "trophy" houses; need local movie theater; negative visual impacts of signage; ensure against security problems and signage impacts associated with greenway proposal; improve traffic safety at Henry Hudson Parkway/West 246th Street service road (southbound exit); promote tree preservation.

## **Friends of Jerome Park Reservoir**

### *Neighborhood Improvement Priorities*

1. Oppose Filtration Plant.
2. Prohibit Filtration Plant in through zoning text change.
3. Ensure against public health threats from chlorine used for reservoir treatment.
4. Develop community evacuation plan, as related to above priority.
5. Improve maintenance around and preserve the Jerome Park Reservoir

### *Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Oppose Filtration plant and related facilities around Jerome Park Reservoir.
2. Prevent development that will increase traffic congestion.
3. Prevent development expansions that remove open space or recreational resources.
4. Develop a plan for the Jerome Park Reservoir, including landmark designation.
5. Increase Parks Department presence.

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Improve Croton Aqueduct Trail; downzone areas to limit community facility expansion; preserve water views; prevent school overcrowding; create more afterschool programs; ensure against negative impacts of bicycle access on greenways; preserve local character of shopping areas.

## **Friends of Spuyten Duyvil**

### *Neighborhood Improvement Priorities*

1. Maintain and improve area parks (i.e., Ewen Park).
2. Improve commercial districts (i.e., Johnson Avenue, Knolls Crescent and West 231st Street).
3. Attract needed stores and commercial uses through cooperative efforts of civic groups, businesses.
4. Develop a systematic approach to addressing graffiti problems.
5. Develop a realistic plan for river access.

### *Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Create community based schools and thematically based schools.
2. Improve the quality of area business districts.
3. Upgrade area parks.
4. Increase police presence, address graffiti problems.
5. Preserve open space and steep slope areas.

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Improve recycling and provide a composting station; limit scale of future development; preserve Jerome Park Reservoir, prevent Filtration Plant; install bicycle racks; improve traffic islands as green spaces with plantings; improve greenway with limited improvements to existing facilities, with longer range improvements considered; improve steps streets; create additional sitting areas on Johnson Avenue.

## **Riverdale Community Association**

### *Neighborhood Improvement Priorities*

1. Increase policing to address crime and quality of life concerns (i.e., noise, public nuisances).
2. Preservation neighborhood scale and character.
3. Improve schools through linkages with colleges and splitting the School District.
4. Address quality of life concerns such as controlling noise impacts, impacts from idling buses, improving sidewalk cleanliness, preventing graffiti.
5. Improve commercial areas, foster cooperative efforts among businesses.

### *Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Prepare a comprehensive plan for School District, strengthening its schools and splitting the School District up (rezone).
2. Reduce crime.
3. Support the establishment of a Business Improvement District.
4. Clean up and prevent dumping on Metro-North and Putnam Line right-of-way.
5. Protect neighborhood character, including by preventing the Filtration Plant.

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Expand Natural Area District; eliminate Community Facility Bonus; undertake downzoning actions where appropriate; revise transfer-of-development-rights zoning provisions; protect views of the Hudson River; rehabilitate deteriorated buildings; protect against impacts of community facilities on neighborhoods; undertake improvement to existing pedestrian/bicycle trails rather than creating new facilities, in order to protect against potential impacts of such; acquire and improve Putnam Line right-of-way; repair step streets; protect steep slopes from erosion and prevent pollutants from entering waterbodies in the course of City drainage and roadway improvements; upgrade commercial lighting, planting, signage; improve parking.

## **Riverdale Mental Health Association**

### *Neighborhood Improvement Priorities*

1. Improve schools.
2. Improve parking in commercial areas.
3. Address east-west transportation.
4. Upgrade housing in Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge Heights and Marble Hill.
5. Improve public safety.

### *Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Community revitalization in Kingsbridge, Kingsbridge heights and marble Hill (housing and commercial areas).
2. Reduce car thefts.
3. Improve parking in commercial areas.
4. Ensure stable funding for community not-for-profit agencies.
5. Improve neighborhood schools in order to retain younger families.

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Promote downzoning actions to preserve neighborhood character; eliminate illegal uses; improve handicapped access to trains; preserve character of existing country-like roadways, including restricting new sidewalks; ensure that growth occurs in a controlled way.

## **Riverdale Nature Preservancy**

### *Neighborhood Improvement Priorities*

1. Strengthening Special Natural Area District (SNAD) regulations to preserve historic roads, walls and old growth trees. For instance, 80% of SNAD area buildings are exempt from the regulations as they exist now.
2. Rezoning SNAD area to maintain existing scale (downzoning).
3. Zoning text change to eliminate the Community Facility bonus.
4. Protect the waterfront from development.
5. Restore stormwater drainage systems in a manner that strengthens vegetation in adjacent parkland.

### *Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Downzoning rezoning action.
2. Expansion of the SNAD.
3. Elimination of the Community Facility bonus.
4. Protection of the waterfront.
5. Improve education.

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Address aesthetic appearance of area roadways, i.e., fencing, parking impacts; provide access to the Hudson River; address impacts from conversion of residential uses to community facility uses, i.e., visual (larger) and traffic (increased parking demand); Greenway improvements will benefit overall community while potentially impacting adjacent homeowners. Need to address security; improve poor roadway conditions to the west of the Henry Hudson Parkway; limit on-street parking; limit "big box" retail; prepare waterfront plan as part of 197-a Plan.

## **Riverdale Neighborhood House**

### *Neighborhood Improvement Priorities*

1. Limit institutional expansion and associated neighborhood impacts.
2. Foster community activities and cultural programs.
3. Foster neighborhood cleanliness.
4. Improve school facilities and programs.
5. Improve public safety

### *Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Strengthen schools
2. Improved relations/communication between different parts of the district.
3. Enhance after school and weekend youth programs.
4. Improve public safety.
5. Improve neighborhood appearance, maintenance

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Need more unified appearance of commercial facades; implement greenway

## **Riverdale YM-YWHA**

### *Neighborhood Improvement Priorities*

1. Strengthen and improve public schools.
2. Create additional middle income housing
3. Promote cultural understanding, prevent bias
4. Foster dialogue among groups within district.
5. Promote volunteerism.

### *Community District-wide Priorities*

1. Strengthen and improve public schools.
2. Create additional middle income housing
3. Improved safety.
4. Strengthen community pride through volunteer programs
5. Stronger inter-group relations

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Other: more local consultation needed over filtration plant and other projects; utilize local groups programs to improve local facilities; enhanced open space resources; more senior support services; safety concerns over greenway; provide senior transportation and bicycle racks.



## **Spuyten Duyvil Homeowners Association**

### *Neighborhood Improvement*

#### *Priorities*

1. Safety/security improvements
2. Improved step street maintenance
3. Improved street tree pruning

### *Community District-wide*

#### *Priorities*

1. Need more Kingsbridge representation
2. Improve quality of life with community input
3. Preservation of neighborhood scale
4. Oppose filtration plant in Bough of Bronx
5. Acquisition of additional parkland

### *Other Recommendations/Concerns*

Other: institutional impacts of noise, traffic; impacts of delivery trucks (parking, noise), Kingsbridge Library relocation, stricter zoning, code enforcement, security concerns over greenway

\* See interview summaries for Marble Hill Houses Tenants Association and Marble Hill Neighborhood Improvement Corporation for additional community planning priorities and concerns.

**Bronx Community Board #8 197-a Plan: Neighborhood Association Questionnaire**

Bronx Community Board #8 is in the process of preparing a comprehensive plan that will address land use issues, community facilities and educational facilities, the quality of the area's commercial districts, improving transit, protection of natural features, housing, and other matters of concern to area residents, businesses and community groups. As part of the Board's information gathering and outreach effort, neighborhood organizations in the area are being asked to respond to the following questionnaire. Your responses will serve as one of the inputs to the preliminary plan that will be discussed at a future public meeting of Community Board #8. Please feel free to provide additional written pages or materials as needed to explain your concerns.

-----

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1) Please describe your organization's activities and the area that it serves.

2) What are your top five priorities for improving your neighborhood?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

3) What land use issues are most critical in your neighborhood? Are there changes in land use regulations (ie, zoning, building code regulations and enforcement or environmental regulations) that you would recommend?

4) What features enhance the quality of life in your neighborhood and what features detract from the quality of life in your neighborhood?

- 5) Do community, open space and recreational resources in your neighborhood adequately serve existing needs or the needs of a changing population? How has the population changed in your neighborhood and what additional community resources are needed?
- 6) What role do you see community facilities, such as health and education related institutions, playing in your community. Do you have any concerns regarding community facilities.
- 7) There has been discussion over the creation of a combined middle school/high school at MS 141. How do you view this issue?
- 8) The Bronx Advisory Committee to the Hudson River Valley Greenway has examined the designation of a greenway as part of the overall Hudson River Greenways plan that is being prepared by the City. Recommendations will be made to the New York City Parks Department that seek to improve bicycle and pedestrian access in Community District #8 with a designated route running from Manhattan to the City line. Do you see a need for such improvements? What issues do you see associated with this proposal?
- 9) With regard to transportation improvements, what access issues and opportunities exist in your community (ie, needed roadway or transit improvements, potential bikeway improvements, step street improvements)?
- 10) What are the most critical environmental and open space features in your community (ie, steep slopes, scenic views) and how are these being impacted or preserved?

11) What are the commercial centers that residents of your area rely on. Do you feel adequately served by these centers. Do you see opportunities for expansion or preservation of these centers? Do you see the need for minor or major rehabilitation? Please describe.

12) Do you see the need in commercial areas either for more parking, changed parking regulations, bicycle racks or better pedestrian access? Please describe.

13) What types of businesses or uses would do you like to see maintained in the commercial and mixed residential-commercial centers in Community District #8 and what do you think should be brought into these centers?

14) What are your top five priorities for Community District #8 as a whole?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

15) Are there any other planning issues that you would like to have addressed as part of the Community Board #8 197-a Plan, or as part of a "vision statement," or comprehensive plan for the Community District #8 environs?

*Please return this questionnaire by October 5<sup>th</sup> to:* Bronx Community Board #8  
5676 Riverdale Avenue  
Bronx, New York 10471

**APPENDIX C**

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**List of Community and Agency Interviews**

Bronx Community Board 197-a Plan  
List of Community and Agency Interviews

1. Tina Argenti, Karen Argenti. 7/16/98.
2. Nestor Danyluk, Tom Hess, Elizabeth Macintosh, John O. Philips, Barbara Weisberg, New York City Department of City Planning. Various dates 6/98-5/00.
3. Honorable New York City Assemblyman Jeffery Dinowitz. 3/18/99.
4. Honorable New York City Councilwoman June Eisland. 7/98.
5. Linda Dockery, Van Cortlandt Park Administrator, New York City Parks Department. 8/3/99.
6. Paul Elston and Mary Bandzuikas, AICP, Riverdale Nature Preservancy. 7/28/98.
7. Janet Golovner, Executive Director, Kingsbridge-Riverdale-Van Cortlandt Village Development Corporation. 7/8/98.
8. Joshua Laird, Director of Planning, New York City Department of Parks and Recreation. 7/23/98.
9. Dr. Sandra Lerner, New York City Board of Education. 7/28/98.
10. Charles McHugh, Bronx Division, New York City Department of Transportation. 3/3/99.
11. Michael Pichardo, Director, Marble Hill Neighborhood Improvement Corporation. 7/23/98.
12. Paulette Shlomo, President, Marble Hill Houses Tenants Association. 8/4/98.
13. Ted Weinstein, Bronx Community School District #10, and Director, Neighborhood Preservation Consultant Program, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. 7/17/98.
14. Bernd Zimmerman, Director of Planning, Bronx Borough President's Office. 7/8/98.
15. Theodore Orosz, New York City Transit. 8/99.

**APPENDIX D**

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**Demographic Projections**

Claritas Inc.  
Sales (888)231-4237

1-SEP-98  
Support (800)780-4237

Study area name: Bronx CB8

Household Trend Report

Universe	1980 Census	1990 Census	% Chg 80-90	1998 (Est.)	% Chg 90-98	2003 (Proj.)	% Chg 98-03
Population....	97875	96573	-1.3	95586	-1.0	95249	-0.4
Households....	40121	40113	0.0	39383	-1.8	39253	-0.3
Families.....	26310	24249	-7.8	23420	-3.4	23109	-1.3
Housing Units.	41047	42051	2.4	41469	-1.4	41326	-0.3
Grp Ort. Pop..	4762	5580	17.2	5626	0.8	5642	0.3
Household Size	2.32	2.27	-2.3	2.28	0.7	2.28	-0.1
Income	1979 (Census)	1989 (Census)	% Chg 79-89	1998 (Est.)	% Chg 89-98	2003 (Proj.)	% Chg 98-03
Aggregate (\$MM)	878	1800	105.0	2291	27.2	2614	14.1
Per Capita....	8976	18648	107.8	23972	28.5	27447	14.5
Avg. Household	21719	44225	103.6	57379	29.7	65377	13.9
Median Hhold..	17031	34178	100.7	40451	18.4	41680	3.0
Avg. Family HH	26003	54218	108.5	71479	31.8	80931	13.2
Med. Family HH	21225	43102	103.1	50730	17.7	52003	2.5
Avg. HH Wealth				117573		124240	5.7
Med. HH Wealth				23446		24614	5.0

Household Income	1990 Census	Households		2003 Proj.
		1998 Estimate		
Total.....	40113	39383		39253
Less than \$5,000.....	2129	1460	3.7%	1190
\$5,000 to \$9,999.....	3660	3007	7.6%	2991
\$10,000 to \$14,999.....	2930	3036	7.7%	3194
\$15,000 to \$19,999.....	3018	2532	6.4%	2614
\$20,000 to \$24,999.....	3020	2505	6.4%	2493
\$25,000 to \$29,999.....	2816	2528	6.4%	2254
\$30,000 to \$34,999.....	2839	2356	6.0%	2146
\$35,000 to \$39,999.....	2665	2001	5.1%	1989
\$40,000 to \$44,999.....	2495	2198	5.6%	1822
\$45,000 to \$49,999.....	2153	1831	4.6%	1835
\$50,000 to \$59,999.....	3282	3838	9.7%	3159
\$60,000 to \$74,999.....	3182	3774	9.6%	4010
\$75,000 to \$99,999.....	2925	3594	9.1%	3828
\$100,000 to \$124,999.....	1397	1891	4.8%	2065
\$125,000 to \$149,999.....	583	846	2.1%	1046
\$150,000 to \$249,999.....	688	1276	3.2%	1519
\$250,000 to \$499,999.....	245	510	1.3%	765
\$500,000 or More.....	86	200	0.5%	333

NOTE: When the median household wealth for an area is less than \$25,000 it will be listed on this report as \$24,999.

Data on income are expressed in "current" dollars for each year.  
Decennial Census data reflects prior year income.  
1998 estimates and 2003 projections produced by Claritas Inc.  
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Claritas Inc.  
Sales (888)231-4237

8-SEP-98  
Support (800)780-4237

Study area name: Bronx CB8

Age Report

(Page 1 of 2)

Age	Population					
	1990		1998 Est.		2003 Proj.	
Total.....	96573	100.0%	95586	100.0%	95249	100.0%
under 5....	6073	6.3%	5649	5.9%	5394	5.7%
5 to 9....	5062	5.2%	5990	6.3%	5574	5.9%
10 to 14...	4775	4.9%	5341	5.6%	5906	6.2%
15 to 17...	2859	3.0%	2708	2.8%	3124	3.3%
18 to 20...	4072	4.2%	3340	3.5%	3411	3.6%
21 to 24...	5399	5.6%	3944	4.1%	4020	4.2%
25 to 29...	7667	7.9%	6285	6.6%	4725	5.0%
30 to 34...	7768	8.0%	6532	6.8%	6239	6.6%
35 to 39...	7153	7.4%	7525	7.9%	6489	6.8%
40 to 44...	6727	7.0%	7225	7.6%	7432	7.8%
45 to 49...	5104	5.3%	6546	6.8%	7030	7.4%
50 to 54...	4408	4.6%	5661	5.9%	6240	6.6%
55 to 59...	4393	4.5%	4347	4.5%	5373	5.6%
60 to 64...	4847	5.0%	4169	4.4%	4285	4.5%
65 to 69...	5159	5.3%	4445	4.7%	4183	4.4%
70 to 74...	4282	4.4%	4385	4.6%	4122	4.3%
75 to 79...	4147	4.3%	4298	4.5%	4305	4.5%
80 to 84...	3206	3.3%	3305	3.5%	3395	3.6%
85 + .....	3472	3.6%	3891	4.1%	4002	4.2%
Median.....	38.2		40.3		41.8	

Age	Population					
	1990		1998 Est.		2003 Proj.	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total.....	45.1%	54.9%	45.4%	54.6%	45.4%	54.6%
under 5....	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%	2.9%	2.9%	2.8%
5 to 9....	2.7%	2.5%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%	2.9%
10 to 14...	2.5%	2.4%	2.9%	2.7%	3.2%	3.0%
15 to 17...	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.6%	1.6%
18 to 20...	2.1%	2.1%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.9%
21 to 24...	2.7%	2.9%	2.0%	2.2%	2.0%	2.2%
25 to 29...	3.8%	4.1%	3.4%	3.2%	2.5%	2.5%
30 to 34...	3.8%	4.2%	3.3%	3.6%	3.3%	3.3%
35 to 39...	3.5%	3.9%	3.7%	4.1%	3.1%	3.7%
40 to 44...	3.2%	3.7%	3.4%	4.1%	3.6%	4.2%
45 to 49...	2.4%	2.9%	3.2%	3.7%	3.3%	4.1%
50 to 54...	2.0%	2.6%	2.7%	3.2%	3.1%	3.5%
55 to 59...	2.0%	2.6%	2.0%	2.5%	2.6%	3.0%
60 to 64...	2.2%	2.8%	1.9%	2.5%	1.9%	2.6%
65 to 69...	2.2%	3.1%	1.9%	2.7%	1.8%	2.6%
70 to 74...	1.7%	2.7%	1.8%	2.8%	1.7%	2.6%
75 to 79...	1.6%	2.7%	1.7%	2.8%	1.7%	2.8%
80 to 84...	1.1%	2.2%	1.2%	2.2%	1.2%	2.3%
85 + .....	0.9%	2.7%	1.0%	3.0%	1.1%	3.1%
Median.....	35.4	40.8	37.6	42.8	39.1	44.1

1998 estimates and 2003 projections produced by Claritas Inc.  
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**APPENDIX E**

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**OTHER ZONING ISSUES**

## **Appendix E Other Zoning Issues**

### **1. Zoning Lot Mergers/Transfer of Air Rights**

In addition to zoning text changes related to the SNAD-2 area and community facilities, a zoning text change placing greater restrictions on zoning lot mergers is proposed. Specifically, a cap is proposed on the increase in developable floor area resulting from future zoning lot mergers, or transfers of air rights. Floor area increases should be limited to no more than 20 percent above the amount achievable without combined zoning lots to prevent development substantially in excess of that normally permitted. In addition, a requirement for notification of the Community Board 30 days in advance of the normal referral period for such actions is proposed to provide for increased community consultation.

### **2. Enforcement Issues**

Housing overcrowding and illegal two and three-family residential uses are district-wide safety and quality of life concerns. To prevent changes in neighborhood-wide densities that might affect neighborhood character, to protect public safety, and to limit future parking and service impacts, increased enforcement of illegal conversions of single and two-family residences is proposed. To allow homeowners to bring their properties into conformance with occupancy regulations prior to this proposed stricter enforcement effort, a two-year amnesty period should be provided.

### **3. Community Facilities and the Neighborhoods**

Private and not-for-profit institutions and health and education-related community facilities in Community District #8 are important elements of the local economy that contribute needed services. However, the construction of new, and the expansion of existing, community facilities have raised concerns over neighborhood impacts. Zoning regulations allow increased height and bulk for community facilities as opposed to residential development. With numerous institutions within the district that have extensive campuses with remaining open space and development potential, concerns have been raised that existing zoning regulations will not adequately protect the character of surrounding neighborhoods and natural features.

The 197-a Plan recommends modifying the general Community Facility provisions of the Zoning Resolution to address the inconsistency between existing neighborhood residential character and the altered neighborhood character potentially resulting from the build-out of the area's community facility properties. For instance, community facility uses in R3, R4, and R5 districts may currently obtain a floor area bonus for deep front yards and wide side yards. The bonuses can permit excessive height and bulk, with a 20 percent bonus permitted for deep front yards and one wide side yard of 15 feet in the R4 district. In the R3 district, the floor area bonus is 60 percent. Plazas that are provided to obtain bonuses are often

privatized and detract from the streetscape, a problem currently being examined in the Department of City Planning's ongoing study to revise the New York City Zoning Ordinance. Lot coverage regulations for community facilities are less restrictive for community facilities than for residential uses -- within the R3-2 district, for example, community facilities are permitted to cover 55 percent of total lot area, as opposed to 35 percent for residential uses. This difference should either be eliminated or reduced. Another concern is that community facilities can locate in a required rear yard area up to a height of 23 feet.

The 197-a Plan supports the efforts of the Department of City Planning to formulate revised Community Facility regulations that recognize neighborhood form and character, as well as the future needs of the institutions that occupy these sites. Objectives include channeling facilities away from narrow side street locations, limiting the extension of development into established yard areas, establishing height limitations, lot coverage requirements and setback limits for community facility uses in a way similar to those of residential uses, and establishing more restrictive parking regulations, including for accessory uses.

The New York City Department of City Planning's 1993 *Community Facility Zoning Study* expressed a need to tighten controls on community facilities, particularly in residential districts, while maintaining them in commercial districts and easing them in manufacturing districts. Implementation of the 1993 study's recommendations related to neighborhoods and community facilities is proposed. The Department's report also discussed eliminating the prohibition against concentrations of community facilities. Such a measure would negatively affect Community District #8, which is currently considered to be an "impacted area" for nursing home facilities. As such, any expansions are required to obtain certification from the Department of City Planning stating that no Special Permit is required. Any proposal to modify this zoning provision needs to take into account the existing concentration of community facilities in the area and the need to protect the area's neighborhoods from impacts of further community facility development and expansion.

Future revisions to community facility zoning proposed by the Department of City Planning should also ensure the future viability of area educational, religious, and health related institutions. These local institutions have expressed concerns through interviews and during the 197-a public outreach process, over any proposed zoning controls that might affect their ability to add needed facilities and obtain financing. Such interests need to be balanced with the goal of protecting neighborhood character.

#### **4. Large-Scale Retail and Manufacturing Districts**

Future zoning revisions for commercial uses in manufacturing districts should improve the range of stores in the area, bringing in more anchors without overpowering what exists now. Communication with residents and local leaders over this issue will be critical to ensure that regulations neither consign the commercial districts to economic stagnation, nor decimate

small local businesses that are the backbone of the community. Any future commercial zoning text changes, particularly regarding revised regulations for large scale retail uses in manufacturing districts, should include the following requirements:

- ensure the protection of neighborhood character;
- limit impacts from through traffic;
- provide sidewalk oriented storefronts;
- provide pedestrian connections to adjacent uses;
- limit visual impacts related to commercial bulk with sensitive architectural treatment;
- provide adequate landscaping, including landscaped buffers, for parking areas.

**APPENDIX F**

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**197-a PLAN CONSISTENCY WITH  
OTHER PLANS AND POLICIES**

## Appendix F

### **197-a Plan Consistency with Other Plans and Policies**

The following section reviews the consistency of the 197-a Plan recommendations with the Mayor's Strategic Policy Statement, the Bronx Borough President's Strategic Policy Statement, and Waterfront Policies of the City of New York.

Coordination with other agencies and levels of government was also accomplished from early on in the 197-a community planning process through numerous documented interviews with agency and elected officials. Ongoing policies and programs are described throughout the 197-a Plan and hearings on the 197-a Plan included reviewing the consistency of actions being discussed with broader city policies, and with the recommendations of City agencies.

### **197-a Plan Consistency with the Strategic Policy Statement of the City of New York**

The Strategic Policy Statement of the City of New York is a city-wide report that focuses on nine policy goals for the city's short and long term future. Overall, the 197-a Plan is similar to the Strategic Policy Statement in that it focuses on quality of life improvements, education, and fostering a strong local economy. Differences between the two plans largely relate to the scope of their focus, with the 197-a plan being more specific about how to protect the qualities that distinguish this part of the northwest Bronx. In a few cases, policies of the two plans appear to have divergent viewpoints, including the need to speed up reviews of development proposals, or streamlining, noted in the Strategic Policy Statement, as compared to the increased input that our Board's 197-a Plan recommends it have in the review process for Special Natural Area District applications. Other recommendations of the city-wide plan deal with issues that go beyond the community-level framework of the Community Board's 197-a Plan.

The first section of the Strategic Policy Statement promotes the goal of making New York the safest biggest city in the nation. While the city's approach to reducing crime is not a focus of the CB8 Plan, several Strategic Policy Statement recommendations from this section are echoed in the Board's Plan. These include encouraging public involvement and strengthening after-school programs, including for delinquency prevention.

The 197-a Plan's emphasis on technology improvements and linkages is supported to a certain extent in the Strategic Policy Statement's call for schools to provide up-to-date, technology based learning. Other city-wide educational issues addressed in the Strategic Policy Statement, such as mandatory summer school, the quality of the City University system, and bilingual education, are not addressed in the 197-a Plan.

While the recommendations of the Strategic Policy Statement's third policy goal related to the city's youth go beyond the local focus of the CB8 Plan (for instance,

recommendations regarding the Administration for Children's Services), the CB8 Plan similarly recommends an expanded array of recreational facilities for children, including increased use of schools for after school programs.

Both the Strategic Policy Statement and the 197-a Plan have a similar emphasis on providing work skills, as seen in the fifth Strategic Policy Statement policy goal of increased self sufficiency. While the City's Plan goes into a range of issues beyond the purview of the Community District, some of its broad goals such as allowing the elderly and disabled to live as independently as possible are supported in the CB8 Plan, which recommends ensuring adequate transportation facilities for the elderly, and for those on whom they depend. However, the Strategic Policy Statement's recommendation to modify zoning regulations to facilitate the development of both for-profit and not-for-profit assisted living residences could be seen as being inconsistent with resident's concerns over the form of such recently developed housing in CB8, as expressed in the 197-a Plan. The 197-a Plan recommends modifying such regulations to ensure compatibility of scale and minimization of impacts on adjacent residential areas. However, it should be noted that Community District #8 was previously described as an impacted area in regard to nursing home beds and has more than its fair share of facilities for the elderly.

The sixth policy goal described in the Strategic Policy Statement, a sustainable environment, is consistent with the themes of the 197-a Plan. Recommendations for an on-street system of bicycle paths and improved bicycle parking can be found in both the CB8 and the City's plans, as well as an emphasis on maintaining the natural features of these areas.

As related to the Strategic Policy Statement discussion of water supply and the need for a facility to filter and treat the Croton Water supply, the CB8 Plan emphasizes the need to consider community impacts and protection of the unique features of the Jerome Park Reservoir environs. This area had been considered at one time for the siting of such a facility. The 197-a Plan instead recommends protecting the attractive qualities and sense of place and history of this area, a theme that runs throughout the 197-a Plan.

The two plans generally express the same concern for protection of natural resources. The Strategic Policy Statement discusses the importance of wetlands and urban forest areas as migratory stopovers for wildlife, and for their role in protecting air quality and the city's overall quality of life. The CB8 197-a Plan recommends specific zoning-related measures to be taken to protect forested and steep slope areas.

#### **197-a Plan Consistency with the 1998 Strategic Policy Statement for The Bronx**

Like the Mayor's Strategic Policy Statement, the Bronx Borough President's Strategic Policy Statement includes policies and recommendations that are beyond the scope of the CB8 197-a Plan. Yet while the Bronx Borough President's Strategic Policy Statement is



more far-reaching, both the CB8 and the Borough Plans are long range, and share a common vision of preserving and strengthening neighborhoods and improving education.

The CB8 Plan recommends replacing or expanding the Kingsbridge Library and expanding other area library resources, including enhancing their technological resources. This is echoed in a broad sense in the Borough President's Plan through recommendations to finance improvements in computer facilities and services to reconnect the Bronx to the regional economy.

The Bronx Strategic Policy Statement recommends creating new business and job opportunities. This goal is consistent with goals described in the CB8 197-a Plan. Specific recommendations are made in the Borough President's plan to areas of the Bronx south and east of CD8 that are not addressed or relevant to the CB8 plan.

Related to new retail development, both plans advocate balancing business needs and community concerns. The Bronx Strategic Policy Statement supports an approach to big box retail, like the CB8 197-a Plan, that focuses on sensitivity to community concerns, and focuses on the potential traffic impacts of such uses. The Broadway corridor is of particular relevance in this regard since its physical constraints – the presence of the elevated IRT line, and abutting potential greenway – create a need for sensitive planning and design of future uses along this corridor.

Like the CB8 197-a Plan, the Bronx Strategic Policy Statement emphasizes the need for additional job training opportunities in the community as part of its economic development strategy.

Part Five of the Bronx Strategic Policy Statement includes a strategy to preserve neighborhoods. The theme of the CB8 197-a Plan is generally consistent with this goal. Specific policies are echoed in both plans, such as the need to address threats to neighborhood environmental qualities, including the once contemplated proposal to construct a water filtration plant within the stable residential area of Jerome Park (Jerome Park Reservoir).

Both plans also recommend encouraging the preservation of existing housing, improving the quality of neighborhoods through better urban design, expanding greenways, and supporting efforts to create Business Improvement Districts.

### **Waterfront Policies of the City of New York**

The New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program includes general and specific policies that address waterfront issues in CD8. Pursuant to the federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, New York has defined coastal zone boundaries and policies that are to be utilized to evaluate waterfront projects. New York City's Waterfront Revitalization Program (WRP) was approved by New York State in 1982 and amended by the City Council in 1999. The new Waterfront Revitalization Program replaces the 56 city and state policies in the original WRP with ten policies.

The waterfront-related recommendations of the 197-a Plan include preserving the scale, natural features, and scenic views of the waterfront areas within CD8 and improving public access to the waterfront with a proposal to create a waterfront park at the Riverdale Station. These recommendations are inherently consistent with the goals of the WRP.

Recommendations of the 197-a Plan related to greenways and waterfront access have been supported in previous plans of the Department of City Planning. For instance, the Putnam Railroad Trail, greenway improvements for the Mosholu-Pelham Greenway, and the Hudson River Greenway Trail were all priority routes of the Greenway Plan for the City of New York. In the case of waterfront access at the Riverdale Metro-North Railroad Station, the proposal of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to create public waterfront access was supported in a Community Board #8 resolution adopted in March 2001.

**ADDENDUM**

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**Bronx Community Board 8 Draft 197-a Plan  
Supplemental Information Addendum August 2002**

The following supplemental information was requested by the Department of City Planning during the Threshold Review phase of the 197-a Plan process.

**1. Riverdale Special Natural Area District**

Further documentation of the specific natural features of the areas recommended for extension of the Riverdale Special Natural Area District are included in the attached photo pages, as requested by the Department. These further demonstrate the presence of natural features such as steep slope areas, rock outcrops, and heavily wooded areas that could benefit from the protections afforded by these regulations.

The following section provided by the Riverdale Nature Preservancy includes further description of the issues related to increasing protections of the natural features of the Riverdale Special Natural Area District zoning text. It also provides descriptions of specific sites in the Special Natural Area District that could potentially be impacted by development in the future.

**Additional Description of Areas Recommended for Extension of the Riverdale Special Natural Area District**

The need for increased protections is demonstrated by a number of projects that would have removed important natural features, diminished neighborhood character, or overloaded the existing infrastructure had local residents not initiated compromise solutions. These occurrences are described below. Several ongoing conditions continue to threaten the long-term stability of the natural and built environments.

*Horace Mann School* – as part of a project to modify playing fields on its property at the northwest corner of West 246<sup>th</sup> Street and Tibbett Avenue, the school proposed installing a retaining wall over 10 feet high along the entire corner. A large rock outcrop would have been partially destroyed and completely removed from view. Intensive negotiations between the school and local neighbors resulted in a landscaped corner that retains the natural rock outcrops and contributes to rather than destroys the bucolic ambiance of the neighborhood (see attached photos 58 and 59).

*Hebrew Home for the Aged* – West 261<sup>st</sup> Street is the only street connecting the bus stops on Riverdale Avenue to the entrance of the Hebrew Home on Palisade Avenue. West 261<sup>st</sup> Street is also very narrow and lined with a number of large trees, and had no sidewalk. The mixture of Hebrew Home staff walking to work and motorized traffic was unsafe and troubling. Local residents initiated negotiations between Mt. St. Vincent College and the Hebrew Home that resulted in the installation of a sidewalk along West 261<sup>st</sup> Street, on College property, to the Hebrew Home entrance. Installation of the sidewalk did not alter the narrow, rural character of the street (photo 60). In its continuing efforts to be a good neighbor to the community, the Hebrew Home has also

recently prepared a master plan of future development, to facilitate discussions with community members as projects are developed.

*Campagna Estate* – The Campagna Estate, a NYC landmark building located at the southeast corner of Independence Avenue and West 249<sup>th</sup> Street, is situated on a wooded rise overlooking Wave Hill. The Estate and Wave Hill continue to work together to evoke the visual elegance of the old estates. The Estate is currently used as a dormitory and study area for a Yeshiva. In an effort to provide its existing student body with improved accommodations and study areas, the Yeshiva recently proposed a massive addition onto the rear of the building. Trees alongside the addition, on the slope above Independence Avenue, would have been removed, adding to the visibility of the new wing from the road. Discussions with the community board have resulted in design changes that will make the additions less visible from the street, thereby minimizing the project's intrusion onto the corner.

*Wave Hill* – When a new stormwater drainage system was needed along its property boundaries on Independence Avenue and Spaulding Lane, Wave Hill installed stone gutters in keeping with the rustic character of its property and the properties in the surrounding area. However, it is unwise to depend on the good will of property owners in every circumstance.

*Chapel Farm* – An application to construct 13 detached residences on this site in Fieldston was disapproved. Neighborhood opposition included concerns about overloading the existing sewers and roads. Many of the sewers in Fieldston are already at capacity.

*"Kennedy House"* – This private residence is known as the Kennedy House because it was occupied by the Joseph P. Kennedy family while John F. Kennedy was attending Riverdale Country School during the years 1926-1928. The house is located on the southeast corner of W. 252<sup>nd</sup> Street and Independence Avenue. It has been expanded to the maximum permitted FAR of 0.5 and is vastly out of character with the surrounding area (photo 61). A reduction of the maximum permitted FAR in the NA-2 district to 0.4 would moderate the bulkiness of future similar projects.

*YM&YWHA* – Construction of the Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association (YM & YWHA), located on Arlington Avenue just north of West 256<sup>th</sup> Street, resulted in removal of most of the property's trees. The YM & YWHA was constructed on the foundation of an incomplete structure and was therefore not subject to SNAD review.

*Failing stormwater drainage systems threaten the character of neighborhood roads.* Ongoing threats to the character of neighborhood streets are the failures of storm water drainage systems along West 254<sup>th</sup> Street (photos 62 and 63) and Palisade Avenue (photos 64 and 65). Stormwater is undermining the roadways, cutting gullies in Riverdale Park, and washing sediment onto the railroad properties below the park. The

community needs to be assured that repairs made by the City will respect neighborhood character.

*Existing zoning permits development vastly out of scale with existing development and is an incentive to alter the balance of residential and community facility uses.*

The SNAD neighborhoods are developed to just over one-half their permitted capacity. As noted above in the discussion of the Kennedy House, developing a property to full capacity can overwhelm the surrounding neighborhood and destroy its bucolic setting. Additionally, the development of a very large house like the Kennedy House, which is still possible on other large lots in the area, could result in homes that are so costly that only the very wealthy or institutions will be able to afford them. Herein lies the potential threat of increasing the proportion of community facilities in the area.

Other factors combine to create incentives for community facilities to locate to this area. It is an attractive, safe, and quiet environment. Community facilities appear to prefer large lots, which are still available in the area (the existing facilities occupy large lots; the average lot size is 113,000 sq. ft., the smallest lot is just over 10,000 sq. ft.). There is expansion potential on the lots of existing facilities (the FAR of existing facilities is 0.26, as against the maximum permitted FAR of 0.5). The transfer of air rights provides flexibility for the design of facilities, which could lead to out-of-scale construction.

Community facilities presently comprise approximately one-quarter of the total floor area in the portion of the SNAD zoned R1-2. These facilities include, but are not limited to, schools, places of worship, recreational facilities, libraries, group homes, and a firehouse. The community is functioning reasonably well with this proportion, which should be maintained; the neighborhood is predominantly residential and the infrastructure is not overburdened.

Community facilities are much higher-intensity uses than single-family homes. If additional community facilities locate to the area, or if existing facilities expand to their legal limit, the existing infrastructure could be overwhelmed. The traffic, waste, noise, air pollution, destruction of natural features and other environmental impacts should not be imposed on the neighborhood. Additionally, large bulky facilities would irrevocably alter the semi-rural ambiance of the neighborhood, removing a unique, park-like community from the map of New York City."

Additional justification for strengthening the protections of the Special Natural Area District relate to roadway maintenance and drainage improvements. The 197-a Plan calls for zoning text modification that will include protective measures to ensure that future roadway and drainage improvements within the Special Natural Area District are undertaken in a manner that respects the unique natural and historic character of these areas. For instance, stormwater runoff on Palisades Avenue has been known to spill over into Riverdale Park. West 254<sup>th</sup> Street is another example of an area that has in the past experienced impacts from erosion, such as the creation of gullies that erode soil around tree roots and deposit sediment onto Metro-North Railroad property. Improvements to malfunctioning stormwater drainage systems in this area will need to be done in a manner

that goes beyond the City's standards in order to preserve, where possible, old growth street trees and surrounding topographic conditions. These are illustrated in the attached photo pages. Modified zoning language could also encourage use of Best Management Practice drainage solutions, such as the Environmental Protection Agency's new techniques referred to as Low Impact Development (retaining stormwater on-site as opposed to facilitating the rapid channeling of stormwater into conventional centralized stormwater drainage systems that are designed to capture stormwater and transfer that runoff into area water bodies as fast as possible). Such techniques that could be encouraged through zoning include open drainage, bio-retention, and tree filters.

Additional Descriptions of Natural features in the Special Natural  
Area District (see attached photographs)

**Ewen Park Area**

The entire Ewen Park Area is along the steeply-sloping eastern edge of the Riverdale Ridge, where the ridge slopes down to the Broadway Valley. The USGS topographic map previously submitted shows that the slope along this edge is at least 15 percent grade.

Most of the Area is wooded. In Ewen Park itself, mature maple and oak woodlands are found along the north, west, and south perimeters. These dense areas grade into areas of more widely-spaced trees, which grade into an open, grassy area in the center of the park. Photo 53 illustrates the woodlands along the western side, grading to a less-dense area of London plane trees. Many of the maples, in the right half of the photo, are approximately 10 1/2" caliper, with the large one visible to the extreme right measuring 18 1/2" caliper. The center London plane tree measures 22 1/2" caliper.

The parcel to the north of the park, illustrated by photos 35 and 36, is heavily wooded throughout.

The Ewen Park Area, along with the Edgehill Area and Brust Park, both described below, are the last relatively large, wooded areas on the ridge edge that are undisturbed by structures such as retaining walls or building supports. Their size, vegetation, and undisturbed hydrology allow them to naturally control storm water that would otherwise cascade down the steep slopes and require extensive management. The slow movement of water through the soils lessens the likelihood that storm surges will cause untreated water to overflow the sewers and enter local rivers. It also controls flooding on downslope streets and properties. These wooded parcels also impart the benefits to air quality, climate control, and neighborhood character described in the sections below.

### **Edgehill Area**

The Edgehill Area is important for its dense woods, steep slope, and large rock outcrops. There are four residential buildings in the northwestern corner; one of those is shown in photo 39. The trees are mixed in age, ranging from young to mature and are predominantly maple. The maple directly in the center of photo 54 measures 7" caliper. The large oak in the extreme right of photo 55 measures 12 1/2" caliper. A large rock outcrop runs the length of the property along Johnson Avenue and is shown in photo 55.

As noted in the discussion of the Ewen Park Area above, this area is one of the last relatively large wooded areas on the ridge edge that are undisturbed by structures such as retaining walls or building supports. Protection of this area is important to the control of stormwater flow and to reduction of pollutants entering local rivers. The outcrop contributes to neighborhood ambiance; like the outcrops throughout the Special Natural Area District (SNAD), it recalls the untamed topography of an earlier time.

### **Vinmont Area**

The Vinmont Area hosts a mature oak forest. Photos 41, 43, and 44 show the dense tree growth and range of tree ages. In photo 41, the fourth tree from the left in the foreground measures 10 1/2" caliper; moving right, towards the lamppost, and into the background, the large, illuminated tree measures 25 1/2" caliper. Beech, maple, and sweetgum are mixed among the oaks. Photo 44 shows that even as stem density decreases, the well-developed canopy covers nearly the entire ground area. The landscaping along W. 255<sup>th</sup> Street, shown in photo 42, is significant for the absence of sidewalks and the corresponding increase in permeable surface and water retention capability of this developed block.

These wooded parcels buffer local neighborhoods from the effects of traffic along the Henry Hudson Parkway. They reduce noise pollution generated by parkway traffic and improve local air quality by collecting particulates and absorbing ozone precursors, such as nitrogen oxides, that are emitted by vehicles. In addition, these large wooded parcels contribute greatly to the area's ability to combat the "heat island" effect of urbanized development.

### **Tibbett Avenue Area**

The Tibbett Avenue Area is virtually identical in foliage and appearance to the well-tended urban forest in the adjacent SNAD and should have been included originally in the SNAD. Photos 45 and 56 illustrate the continuity of this landscaping along W. 246<sup>th</sup> Street. Fieldston's urban forest cools the local neighborhood and neighborhoods downwind, reducing the need for air conditioning and its corresponding energy consumption and pollutants. The entire urban forest should be equally recognized and protected under the SNAD.

While Horace Mann School is building on Tibbett Avenue, on the north side of West 246<sup>th</sup> Street, which will inhibit views of Van Cortlandt Park, its athletic fields will still provide a sweeping area of open space and a vista of Van Cortlandt Park at the north end



of the property. The easternmost edge of the school's property slopes steeply down to Broadway and is unbuilt. Slopes are generally over 20 percent grade. Vegetation and soils on the slope reduce surges of stormwater into the sewer system, provide some of the benefits discussed under Ewen Park Area. The vistas and wooded slope contribute to the pastoral sense of the neighborhood.

### **Manhattan College Parkway Area**

This area includes Brust Park (photos 47, 48, and 57) and the campus of the Fieldston Schools. Brust Park is covered with a dense, mature oak forest. Photos 47 and 48 show that the trees are a range of sizes; the tree directly in the center of photo 57 measures 12 1/2 inches caliper. Like the Ewen Park and Edgehill Areas, Brust Park is also along the steeply-sloping eastern edge of the Riverdale Ridge. The stormwater-retention capabilities of wooded parcels such as this along the slope have already been discussed above. They are particularly important at this location because of the multi-story apartment building at the bottom of the hill. This building is clearly seen on the right in photo 48.

The campus of the Fieldston School consists of a somewhat tight cluster of buildings surrounded by woodlands to the north and west and athletic playing fields to the south and east. The overall percentage of tree cover and green open space appears on aerial photographs to be very similar to that of the SNAD. The environmental and health benefits of this green space should be equally recognized and protected.

### **Technical Note**

Tree caliper was measured in accordance with the definition of "caliper" in the NYC Zoning Resolution, Article XI, Chapter 9: Special Hillside Preservation District, which states "'Caliper" of a tree is the diameter of a tree trunk measured 4 feet, 6 inches from the ground. If a tree splits into multiple trunks below 4 feet, 6 inches from the ground, the trunk is measured at its most narrow point beneath the split." (Section F photographs and text source: Riverdale Nature Preservancy).

## **2.. Special Hillside Preservation District Recommendations**

Recommendations for steep slope protection within a separate Hillside Preservation District are documented in the attached photo pages. The 197-a Plan's Special District Proposals map on page IV-23 has also been revised to provide a more specific definition of the proposed Hillside Preservation District (see attached revised Special Hillside Preservation District Proposal Maps). The areas still recommended for steep slope protections include large properties with extensive remaining development capacity and encompass publicly and privately held land, some of which contains existing buildings. The Plan's recommendations are intended to recognize the distinct topographical conditions present in the areas identified and to ensure that any future improvements are undertaken in a manner that is sensitive to the landscape, based on provisions of a newly created Special Hillside Protection District for this area, including the updated

regulations of the City's current Special Hillside Preservation District that is mapped on Staten Island.

The attached photographs support the 197-a Plan's findings that existing regulations within the Special Natural Area District, though already restrictive, do not adequately protect the specific steep slopes and other natural features. These include examples of rock outcrops, residential expansions, and examples of erosion problems. With regard to the Riverdale Special Natural Area District, and whether a second zoning overlay district is appropriate for the areas identified within it for steep slope protections, discussions with Department staff indicated a preference for incorporating potential additional regulations into the Riverdale Special Natural Area District zoning regulations. This alternative zoning approach may be warranted for the steep slope areas within the Riverdale Special Natural Area District.

#### Additional Justification of Special Hillside Preservation District Recommendations

As described in the 197-a Plan and the June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2001 letter to the Department, while the Special Natural Area District includes protections of steep slope areas, stronger protections are needed to preserve the aesthetic value, natural features, contributions to neighborhood character, and vegetation that hillside within the Special Natural Area District provide.

The Department of City Planning has indicated that any potential strengthened Hillside Preservation regulations should be incorporated into the existing Special Natural Area District Regulations, rather than mapping a separate special purpose district on top of the Special Natural Area District. While areas recommended for the Hillside Preservation District located outside of the Special Natural Area District would require mapping of a new overlay district (see enclosed map), additional controls are proposed within the Special Natural Area District to be more consistent with the Special Hillside Preservation District regulations. Examples of the more rigorous protections of sloping land included in the Special Hillside Preservation District include regulations relating to erosion control, lot coverage requirements, building enlargements, landscaping controls, and grading controls that apply to Tier I or Tier II development.

The Special Natural Area District regulations define steeply sloping land as land with greater than 15 percent slope, whereas the Special Hillside Preservation District regulations provide strengthened protections both for zoning lots with an average percent of slope of less than 10 percent (Tier I development), and zoning lots having an average percent of slope equal to or greater than 10 percent (Tier II development).

### **3. Scenic View District Proposals**

Additional photographs of scenic views are included in the attached photographs.

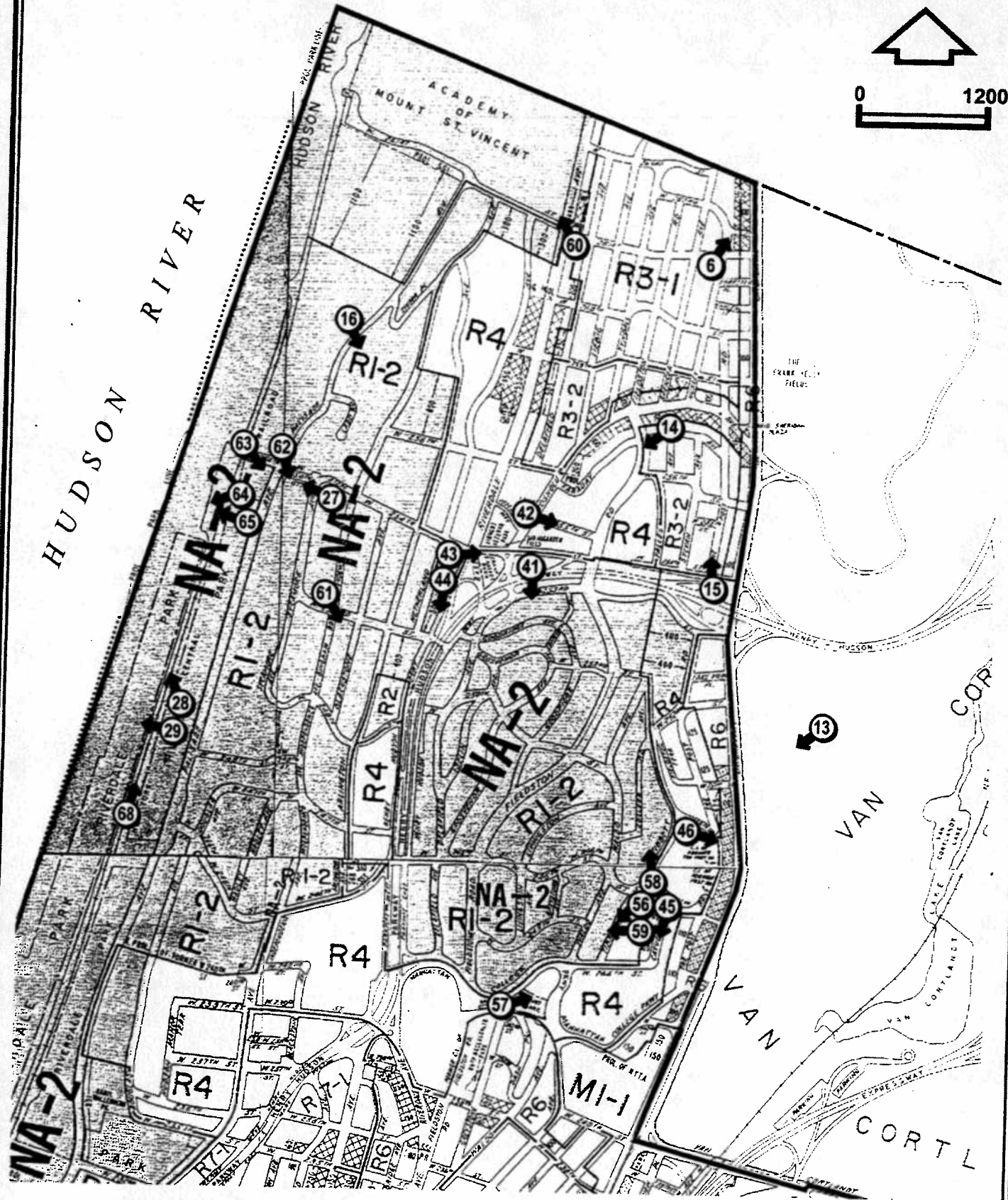
Views from the proposed Special Scenic View District study area surrounding the Jerome Park Reservoir are illustrated in the attached photo pages, including views from Old Fort #4 Park, overlooking the Reservoir and its surrounding open space, and from Fort Independence Park. The view from Fort Independence Park shows diminished visual quality as a result of low water levels in the Reservoir, indicating the importance of a water feature as the central focus of the Jerome Park surroundings. The view of the edge of the Reservoir from the west shows the open space character of the Sedgwick Avenue streetscape adjacent to the Reservoir. The low-to-mid-rise scale of the surrounding development and the historic character of the housing stock are integral to the visual quality of this neighborhood. The proposed Special Scenic View District proposed for the area surrounding the Reservoir is intended to ensure that no future development occurs that would deter from the open space character of this area or break the context of low-to-mid-rise development that is present on surrounding streets.

Views of the Palisades are also highlighted on the attached photo pages. These include unimpeded views of the Hudson River from Riverdale Park and West 254th Street and Palisade Avenue, of the Harlem River from Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park and the surrounding public streets, and the dramatic view of the confluence of the Hudson and Harlem Rivers from the Half Moon Overlook. Numerous parcels exist that could generate development that would block these views. They include parcels owned by the railroads as well as several private residential lots and one community facility property clustered around West 254th Street.

Waterfront views from Marble Hill are shown. Rock cliffs north of the Baker's Field complex in northern Manhattan are seen looking northeast from Marble Hill from West 225th Street. Looking to the northwest, the view from West 225th Street opens up onto a lagoon-like bend in the Harlem River with the backdrop of a boat dock and Inwood Hill Park. The majestic Henry Hudson Bridge frames the view to the west, looking towards the Palisades. Additional development of high-rise buildings such as those now covering a stretch of the railroad right-of-way could block these views and diminish the hilly character of the community and its dramatic views of the Harlem and Hudson Rivers, and of the wooded slopes of Inwood Hill Park in northern Manhattan.



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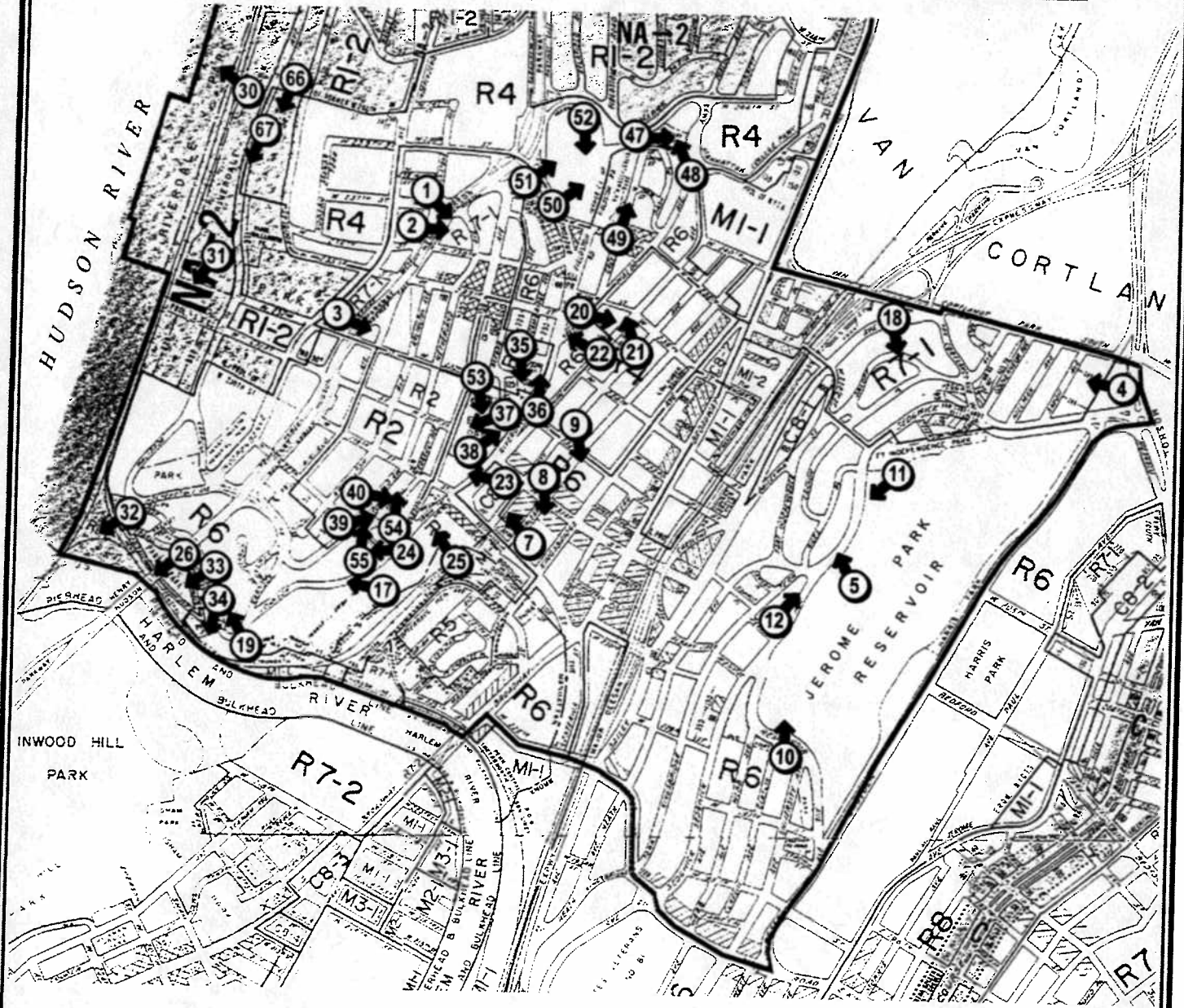
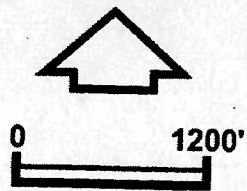


**KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS  
NORTH SECTION**

**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8  
Bronx, New York**

*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants*

**BASE MAP SOURCE: City of New York Planning Commission**



**KEY TO PHOTOGRAPHS  
SOUTH SECTION**

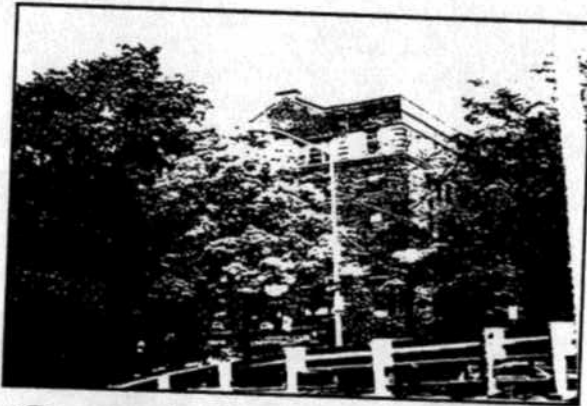
**BRONX COMMUNITY DISTRICT 8  
Bronx, New York**

*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning & Development Consultants*

**BASE MAP SOURCE: City of New York Planning Commission**



1 Rezoning Sub-Area 11: R7-1 to R-7A  
Low-rise development with new construction  
ongoing to rear at Netherland Avenue and  
Henry Hudson Parkway East.



3 Rezoning Sub-Area 11: R7-1 to R-7A  
Existing mid-rise apartment building at  
Fairfield Avenue and Henry Hudson Park-  
way East.



4 Rezoning Sub-Area 5: R7-1 to R-4A  
West side of Saxon Avenue, south of Van  
Cortlandt Park South.



2 Rezoning Sub-Area 11: R7-1 to R-7A  
Completed new high-rise development at  
Netherland Avenue and Henry Hudson  
Parkway East.



5 Rezoning Sub-Area 2: R6 to R6A  
West side of Sedgwick Avenue, north of Giles  
Place.



6 Rezoning Sub-Area 9: R3-1 to R3A  
Huxley Avenue, north of West 261st Street.



7 Rezoning Sub-Area 1: R6 to R5  
West side of Corlear Avenue, north of West 230th Street.

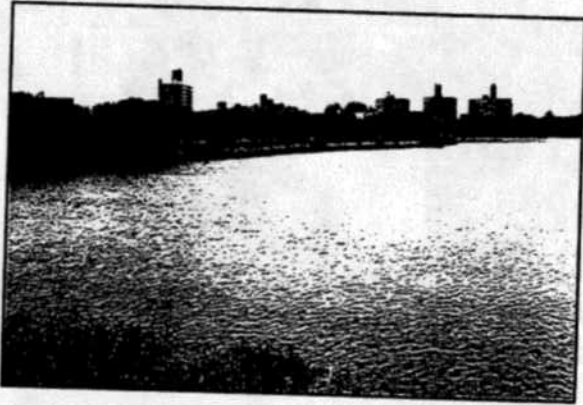


8 Rezoning Sub-Area 1: R6 to R5  
East side of Corlear Avenue, south of West 231st Street.



9 Rezoning Sub-Area 1: R6 to R5  
East side of Corlear Avenue, south of West 232nd Street.

**PROPOSED JEROME PARK RESERVOIR SPECIAL SCENIC VIEW DISTRICT**



**10** *West side of Reservoir, viewed from Old Fort #4 Park.*



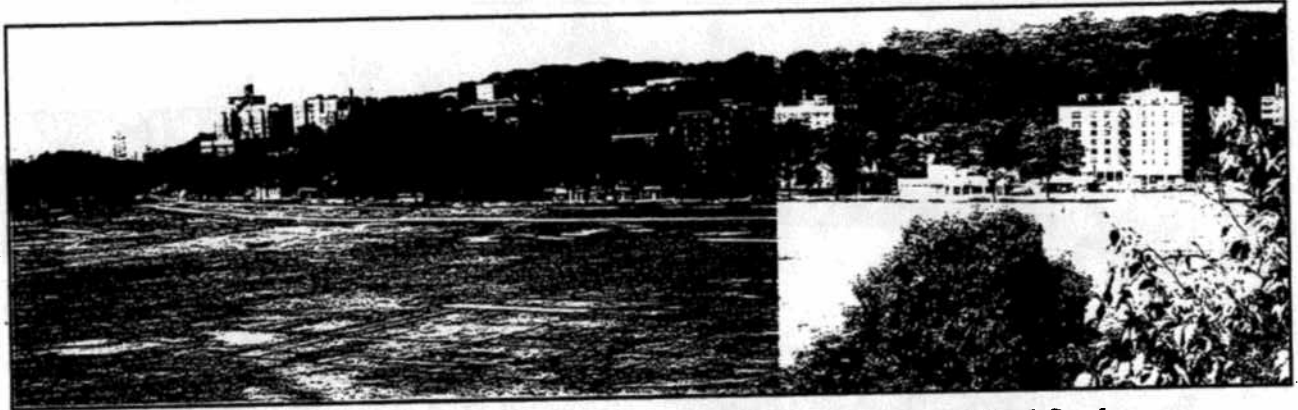
**11** *Jerome Park Reservoir, viewed from Fort Independence Park.*



**12** *Western edge of Reservoir, viewed from Sedgwick Avenue.*



## PROPOSED SPECIAL HILLSIDES PRESERVATION DISTRICT



**13** *Steeply sloping land west of Broadway and north of Van Cortlandt Park South.*



**14** *Rock outcrops southwest of Fieldston Avenue and Faraday Avenue.*



**15** *Rock outcrops on the west side of Post Road, north of West 254th Street.*



**16** *East side of Palisade Avenue, south of West 261st Street.*



**17** *West side of Johnson Avenue, south of 227th Street.*

**PROPOSED SPECIAL HILLSIDES PRESERVATION DISTRICT**



**18** *Steeply sloping land east of Orloff Avenue.*



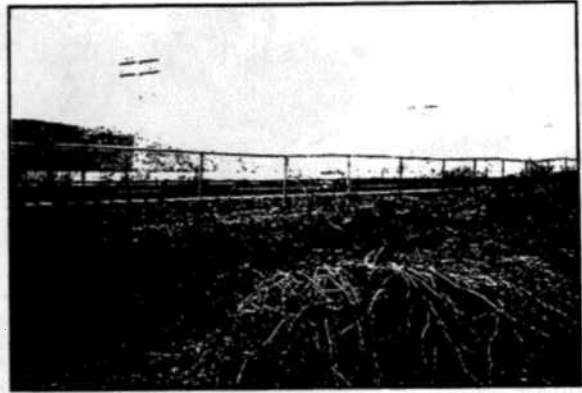
**19** *Johnson Avenue, west of Kappock Street.*

## PROTECTION OF SCENIC VIEWS IN THE SPECIAL NATURAL AREA DISTRICT



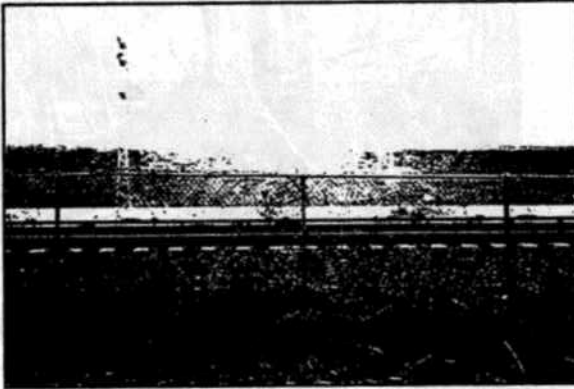
27

Riverdale Park, Northern Section  
View of the Hudson River and the Palisades from West 254th Street, looking downhill from intersection with Independence Avenue, over the roof of SAR.



28

Riverdale Park, Southern Section  
View of the Hudson River and the Palisades from Riverdale Park, at grade with the railroad tracks.



29

Riverdale Park, Southern Section  
Looking directly across the Hudson River to the Palisades from Riverdale Park, at grade with the railroad tracks.



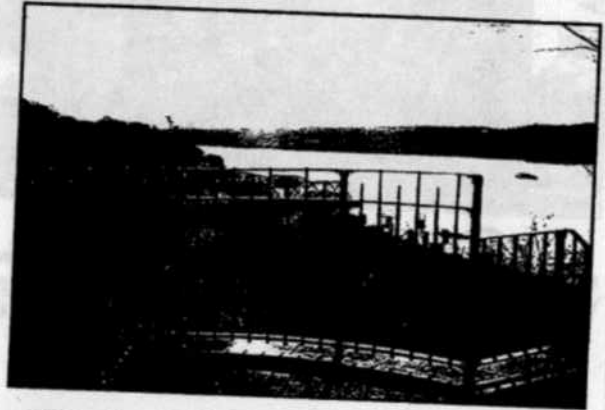
30

Riverdale Park, Southern Section  
View of the Hudson River and Palisades from the westernmost walking path in Riverdale Park; the park is midway up the slope to the Riverdale plateau.

PROTECTION OF SCENIC VIEWS IN THE SPECIAL NATURAL AREA DISTRICT



31 Riverdale Park, Southern Section  
Southernmost extent of the view from Riverdale Park, from the path as it exits the park onto Palisade Avenue, showing houses on the properties south of the park.



32 Spuyten Duyvil Area  
View of the confluence of the Hudson and Harlem Rivers, Inwood Park in Manhattan, and the George Washington Bridge, from Half Moon Overlook (New York City parkland).



33 Spuyten Duyvil Area  
View of the Henry Hudson Bridge and the Harlem River, with Spuyten Duyvil Shorefront Park in the foreground, from Johnson Avenue, just east of a row of houses.



34 Spuyten Duyvil Area  
View of the Harlem River, looking southeast from the same spot as in Photo 33.

## SPECIAL NATURAL AREA DISTRICT EXTENSIONS



**47** Manhattan College Parkway Area  
*Brust Park, showing woodlands and steep slopes.*



**48** Manhattan College Parkway Area  
*The rear of mid-rise residential community facility, showing woodlands and steep slopes, contiguous with Brust Park.*



**49** Manhattan College Parkway Area  
*Commercial development at the corner of West 238th Street and Greystone Avenue.*



**50** Manhattan College Parkway Area  
*Wooded slopes and rock outcrops on the property of Fieldston Schools.*



**51** Manhattan College Parkway Area  
*Wooded slopes and rock outcrops on the property of Fieldston Schools.*



**52** Manhattan College Parkway Area  
*Interior of Fieldston Schools campus, showing the property to be wooded throughout.*

## SPECIAL NATURAL AREA DISTRICT EXTENSIONS



53

### Ewen Park Area

*Ewen Park, looking southeastward from Cambridge Avenue. The photo shows the mature woodland and steep slope that cover much of the park.*



54

### Edgehill Area

*Trees on the property range in age from young saplings to mature specimens. This view is looking up the wooded slope from Johnson Avenue.*



55

### Edgehill Area

*This view is just to the south of Photo 54, also from Johnson Avenue. A massive rock outcrop protrudes from the side of the Riverdale Plateau as the plateau slopes down towards the Broadway Valley.*



56

### Tibbett Avenue Area

*Mature oaks along the south side of West 246th Street are part of Fieldston's well-tended urban forest, and should be recognized and protected as part of the Riverdale Special Natural Area District.*



57

### Manhattan College Parkway Area

*Numerous large oaks cloak the hillside of Brust Park. The woodlands on this slope are particularly important for managing stormwater surges that might otherwise flow toward the apartment building at the bottom of the slope.*

**THE NEED FOR INCREASED PROTECTIONS IN THE  
SPECIAL NATURAL AREA DISTRICT**



**58**

*Recent improvements at Horace Mann School provide an example of how landscaping can contribute to the bucolic  
ambiance of the area rather than detract from it.*



**59**



**60**

*Sidewalk improvements leading  
to the Hebrew Home for the  
Aged avoided impacts to the ru-  
ral character of West 261st Street  
Schools.*



**61**

*The expansion of the property known as the  
"Kennedy House" to its permitted bulk of  
0.5 FAR is vastly out of charcter with the  
surrounding area.*

**THE NEED FOR INCREASED PROTECTIONS IN THE SPECIAL NATURAL  
AREA DISTRICT**

*Erosion and failing stormwater drainage systems need to be addressed  
in ways that are sensitive to the neighborhood character.*



**62** *West 254th Street.*



**63** *West 254th Street.*



**64** *West 254th Street.*



**65** *West 254th Street.*



**THE NEED FOR INCREASED PROTECTIONS IN THE SPECIAL NATURAL  
AREA DISTRICT**

*Additional examples of erosion and failing stormwater drainage systems.*



**66** *Palisade Avenue.*



**67** *Palisade Avenue.*



**68** *Metro-North Railroad right-of-way abutting Riverdale Park.*